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STARVED ROCK



*"The Birthplace
of Illinois"*

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STARVED ROCK

BIRTHPLACE OF ILLINOIS

By C. C. Tisler, editorial staff member Daily Republican Times, Ottawa, Illinois. Vice president of the Illinois State Historical Society 1947-1953. Member of the Civil War Round Table of Chicago; Director of the LaSalle County Historical Society; Winner of the 1951 Regional Award for State and Local History; Author of Lincoln's In Town 1940; Centennial History of Ottawa 1953 and Contributor to different Historical magazines.

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C. C. TISLER
and
ALEITA G. TISLER

FOREWORD

Starved Rock has looked down through the centuries on the Indian busy in his great camp, along the blue waters of the wide Illinois, on his hunting ground and his corn land.

It has seen bobbing canoes of the Jesuits and the Franciscans and heard the orders of their companions, the explorers, who together were the first white men to penetrate Illinois.

It has echoed to the violins of the lonely French soldiers and their friends, thousands of miles from their homeland.

It has seen the camp of the Indians raided and left in ruins by their savage enemies, has looked down on the last of its original people, who climbed its rocky summit to gaze on a virgin land, that teemed with game and was cloaked in giant trees along the shores and on the rocky bluffs.

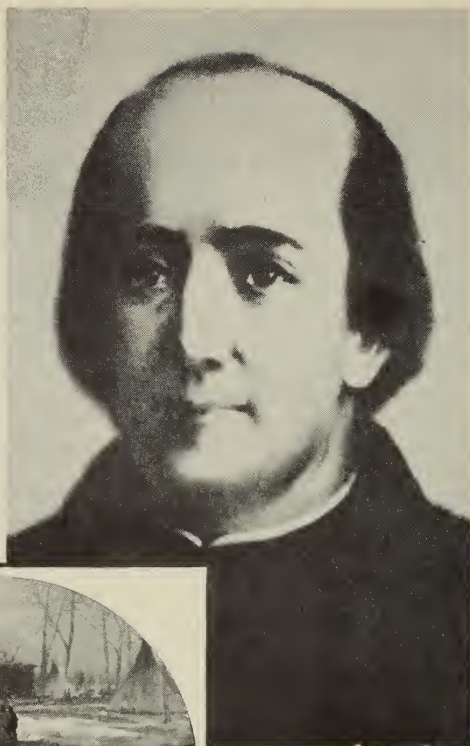
This craggy old piece of jutting rock washed by the river on one side, and inaccessible from two sides must be climbed, now in the same manner as by those who long ago were wrapped in their green quilt in the wilderness.

Acknowledgements are due many persons and other sources for their aid in the preparation of this small volume. These include Dr. James Alton James, Retired Head of the History Department of Northwestern University, Letters and Records of Daniel F Hitt, Monsignor Thomas Meehan of Loyola University of Chicago, W. R. Foster, former superintendent of LaSalle county schools, Baldwin's History of LaSalle county, The Rev. E. J. O'Donnell, S. J., President of Marquette University of Milwaukee, and The Rev. R. N. Hamilton, S. J., Head of the Department of History of the same University, Monsignor Thomas Cleary, pastor of St. John's Church at Bradford, the Rev. Martin H. Coughlin, pastor of St. Mary's Church at Utica, Dr. Joseph E. Fields of Joliet, late Harry Pratt, secretary of the Illinois State Historical Society, Paul Angle, secretary of the Chicago Historical Society, The University of Chicago, Dr. John McGregor of the University of Illinois, The Division of State Parks, and the Illinois State Museum at Springfield, "The Jesuit Relations", "From Quebec to New Orleans" by Bishop Joseph H. Schlarmann, "The Last of a Great Indian Tribe" by Eaton Osman, The Illinois Historical Collections, the Ottawa Weekly Republican, The Daily Republican Times, the Old Ottawa Free Trader Files, the numerous pamphlets, that have been published on the History of Starved Rock by various authors.

CHAPTERS

- 1—BELOVED BLACK ROBE
- 2—MARIE AND MICHAEL
- 3—GENTLEMAN OF FRANCE
- 4—MAPS AND CANOES
- 5—SIEGE AND SLAUGHTER
- 6—RETREAT FROM CANADA
- 7—CRAGGY DEATH TRAP
- 8—VANISHED CAMP GROUND
- 9—SENECA BEAD MAKER
- 10—MODERN PLAYGROUND

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Pere Jacques Marquette, Born
June 1, 1637, Laon, France.
Died May 18, 1675, Luding-
ton, Michigan.



Winter Quarters of Father Marquette.
Courtesy of Chicago Historical Society.

*Ego Jacobus Marquette promitto omnipotenti Deo coram eius
Sargine matre, et tota caelesti curia, et tibi Reverendo Patri
Sacerdoti Oratorem uia promissa Generalis Societatis Iesu et
Sacerdotum eius locum ad expellendum pauperes, et habitum
et sustentationem, et secundum locum curam cum sacerdotum
educationem, iuxta modum in Apostolicis et multis libris dictae
Societatis expressum, ad locum Superiorem Algonquiorum in oppido
Sanda Mariae die 2^a mensis Julii, anno 1671*

Jacobus Marquette.

Gal. 28-f. 112

BELOVED BLACK ROBE

AND now the hour had come, when the Indians of the Illinois valley were to hear from the lips of the Black Robe the Catholic Easter Morning mass and the sermon to follow.

All about this holy and gentle man, his frail body racked with fever, lay the wilderness. The bluffs of the Illinois river, a mile away, were clothed in early spring verdure. Somewhere along the river bank the early comers among the spring birds provided the only orchestral music for the solemn service on the flat plain, a mile or so from the great rock on which was to be reared Fort St. Louis by countrymen of Father Marquette.

And now the hour approached 10 a.m. and there had gathered a vast crowd of red men, their women and their children, the young and the old, the savage and those of gentle heart, the well and the ill, those who had heard of the new faith and were curious to know more of it and those steeped and hopeless in their own pagan beliefs.

And now the Black Robe, with the aid of his trusty paddlers, was about to begin the solemn ceremonies of the Easter Mass, with the great and vaulted dome of the spring heavens and the endless wilderness all about him as his church. The groves were God's first temples and this time, it was true in all sense of the word.

And now there fell upon the great concourse of hundreds of Indians a great silence. Men listened and paid attention. Women bowed their heads. Restless children were quieted and the whimperings of babies were silenced in order that nothing should detract from the age old service that was being celebrated by the Black Robe from overseas with the mark of death already upon him from the hardships he had endured in so many thousands of miles of travel in the wilderness.

And now the ceremony is ended and the Black Robe has called down the blessing of God upon the great concourse, that they may go forth and learn the Christian doctrine and to live at peace and to love one another and to love God and their fellow men with all their hearts.

And now the Black Robe walks among the red men and shakes them by the hand and blesses them, and now he recalls, that near Peoria, he had come upon a baby sick unto death, its face pallid, its eyes closed, its breath coming in gasps.

The Black Robe had comforted the distraught mother of the baby and blessed the child, in its dying moments, for was not the aiding and the comforting of the sick, the dying, and the distraught through heat and cold and loneliness and incredible hardships one of the main objects of all his labors?

And now the Black Robe is gone forever, up the broad river into the noon day sun, his canoe and those of his retainers growing fainter and fainter in the spring sunshine until they vanished forever from the sight of even the keenest eyed member of the Indian village sprawled on the north bank of the lovely Illinois river on April 14, 1675.

And there came rumors back to the village, that the Black Robe had died, that his body had been buried on the lonely shores of Lake Michigan by reverent Indians and his aides and the spot marked with a strong wooden cross so that the Christian Indians could come and pray there long years after his body had been taken north and buried under the floor of the little mission church at St. Ignace, Michigan.

There the reverent still kneel in prayer at the grave of Father Marquette, the gentle and merry hearted priest of the Jesuit order, who on

that spring morning of 1675 chanted the first Easter service in what is now the state of Illinois, south of what is now the village of Utica.

At the same time he founded there, true to his earlier pledge to the Indians, the Mission of the Immaculate Conception the first in all Illinois, the forerunner of the hundreds of Christian Churches, that now dot the state of Illinois.

His congregation of Indians, with the few French "courier de bois" his own retainers and his companion, Louis Joliet, long since have turned to dust.

But Father Marquette's memory lives on, one of the humble followers of Christ, who walked the earth and did good and lived an exemplary life for his church that he served so many years.

His faith and that of others, who followed him and who were not of his belief, but who also dared the hardships of the wilderness long ago to carry the word of God, to the scattered settlers in their lonely cabins on the prairies, lives on and will endure to the end of time.

And now it is October 14, 1951. The hills flamed, with red and gold, with scarlet and burnt umber, and there had gathered the great of Illinois, and its common people, by the thousands to honor the memory of a parish priest, who had been dead nearly three centuries and who had left his mark on the valley for all time.

And now there sounded and was seen all the pomp and pageantry of the church, that Father Marquette had served so well. The fleur-de-lis that he served for his beloved France fluttered in the fall breeze as did the flag of the Republic of France raised long years after he had gone.

The flag of a new nation, that of the United States of America of which he never knew and that of a rich and beautiful state of Illinois, an integral part of the union, dipped gently in the breeze as a prince of the Catholic church, Samuel Cardinal Stritch unveiled and blessed the granite and bronze marker on the lawn of St. Mary's church at Utica to the memory of Marquette, where he chanted his Easter Masses in that now long distant April of 1675.

And now on that brilliant fall day at Utica in 1951, one could see in fancy the ghosts of the centuries looking down on the ceremonies—the ghost of LaSalle, the French explorer, who had planted the lilies of France atop what is now nearby Starved Rock in 1682-3, as a bastion of empire for his emperor Louis XIV.

The ghost of Joliet, the ever faithful companion to Marquette, was there as was that of Henry Tonti, the man with the iron hand, who was equally loyal to impetuous, courageous LaSalle, as he explored the wilderness with him and Allouez, successor to Marquette.

The ghost of Captain Passerat-de-la Chapelle, who may have planted the same lilies of France on Buffalo Rock, four miles east of Starved Rock, in the winter of 1760-1, when he built Fort Ottawa, looked down and called the ceremonies good, but too long delayed to honor the first priest of Illinois. The ghosts of the priests, who followed Marquette, into the valley of Illinois, and who died at the hands of Indians—Fathers Membre, Rasle, de la Ribourde, and Gravier, approved the solemn rites.

The ghost of the red men among whom Marquette had worked and preached, exhorted and comforted, and planted the seeds of Christianity in one of the loveliest valleys of the world, too nodded a poker faced approval—they had loved and honored and respected the Black Robe.

Inscription on the Face of Marker to Father James Marquette, S. J.

PERE MARQUETTE

Born at Laon, France, June 1, 1637.

He died near Ludington, Michigan, May 18, 1675.

Devoted Missioner and Heroic Priest—Explorer, he offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass near this spot Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday 1675 and established the First Christian Mission in the Illinois Country. The monument erected under Archbishop Schlarman, Bishop of Peoria, by contribution of many, was unveiled by His Eminence, Samuel Cardinal Stritch, Archbishop of Chicago, Sunday, October 14, 1951.

Inscription on the Rear of Marker to Father James Marquette, S. J.

"October 24, 1674 Father Marquette set out from the Mission of St. Francis Xavier at the present DePere, Wisconsin, with two young voyageurs, Jacques Le Castor and Pierre Porteret, with orders to proceed to the Mission La Conception among the Illinois.

"From December 4, 1674, to March 30, 1675, they wintered on the banks of the Chicago river and reached the Illinois village of the Kaskaskia Indians, April 8, 1675.

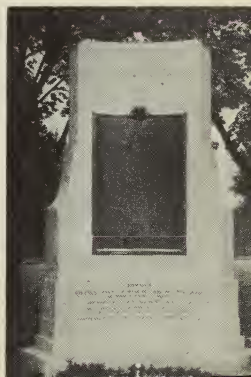
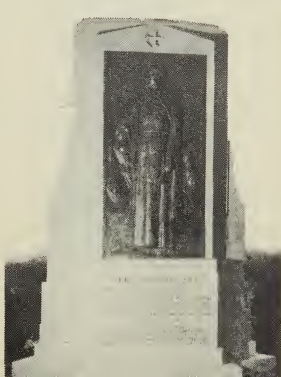
"He was received there as an angel from heaven. He visited all the cabins teaching and instructing the natives. Then he resolved to address all in public. It was a beautiful prairie, close to the village which was selected for the great council. The audience was composed of 500 chiefs and elders seated in a circle around the father, and of the young men, who remained standing. They numbered 1500 men and without counting the women and children.

"He explained the principal mysteries of our religion and the purpose that brought him to their country. Above all he preached to them Jesus Christ, on the very eve of that great day on which He died upon the cross for them, as well as for the rest of mankind, then he offered the Holy Sacrifice, the first Parish Mass in the Illinois Country.

"On Easter Sunday, things prepared as on Thursday, he celebrated the holy mysteries, for the second time. By these two sacrifices, the first ever offered there to God, he took possession of the land in the name of Jesus Christ and gave the Mission the name of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin.

"Drawn from Father Claude Dablon Jesuit Relations and Allied Document LIX." Carved in the granite below this inscription are the following additional lines.

Sponsors, His Excellency, the most Rev. Joseph H. Schlarman, Arch-Bishop of Peoria. Rev. Martin H. Coughlin, pastor of St. Mary's, Utica, the Illinois Valley Chapter, the state council and several councils of the Knights of Columbus, priests and faithful of the diocese of Peoria and Friends".



MARIE AND MICHAEL

THERE was much clacking of tongues and shaking of heads among the Indian squaws and maidens in the ancient village of Kaskaskia over the case of Marie and Michael.

Some took the part of Marie and said that it was a shame, that her father, a chief of the tribe, insisted that she marry Michael, a good looking young French canoe paddler.

In the other camp were those, who said, in effect, that Marie was a spoiled darling, that she still was in her father's wigwam, so to speak and that his wishes for her to marry Michael should be carried out because of filial loyalty.

Father Jacques Gravier, one of the successors to the beloved Marquette, took the side of Marie and the issue of whether to marry or not took on another aspect. It was the talk of the village for a long time and there was more clacking and clucking and head shaking. Marie appears to have been a high class Indian maiden, well liked by both her own people and the few whites in the Illinois valley.

Finally Marie yielded to her parental wishes and was duly married to Michael, who had been a paddler for Father Louis Hennepin, another of the famous explorers of the late 17th century, in the Mississippi and Illinois valleys.

It was one of his paddlers, so the tradition goes, who wrapped himself in some blankets one chilly night along the Illinois river west of Ottawa, rolled some "black stones" into the fire and went off to the land of dreams. He awoke in a sweat for the "stones" in the fire were really coal and his accidental discovery was the first of its kind in North America. It was something like the tale of Charles Lamb and the Chinese discovery of the roast pig by fire and accident.

Back to Marie and Michael and their romance in the wilderness of the Illinois country, which had caused so much excitement among the Indian women and relieved their humdrum life for a few weeks.

Her action, so the Jesuit Relation says, volume 64, increased the conversion of Indians to Christianity to the great joy of Father Gravier.

Breese in his "Early History of Illinois" says "In the oldest record of the church found at the (new) Kaskaskia in the Register of Baptisms of the Missions of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin the first entry bears the date March 20, 1695. Retaining the French spelling of the names it reads like this, "In the year 1695 March 20th, I Jacques Gravier, of the Society of Jesus, baptised Pierro Aco, newly born, of Michael Aco. Godfather was DeHautchy, Godmother Marie Aram-pinchincoue; Maria Joanns, grandmother of the child."

That Michael apparently settled down to caring for his wife and later his son is shown by an ancient deed now in possession of the Chicago Historical society and given to that body in 1893 by Edward G. Mason, who obtained it in Paris.

It shows that on April 1, 1693 Francis de la Forest conveyed a half interest in his Illinois valley concession to Aco. It has been granted him from Tonti and the King of France through the sovereign council in Quebec in August 1691. Aco was to pay 6,000 livres in beaver skins at Chicago for half the concession.

It was signed by De La Forest, Aco, De La Dicourvertes and Nicholas Laurens de Chappelle as witnesses.

Flat topped and lower in height than famed old Starved Rock is the sand stone promontory to the east of it known as Lover's Leap.

Long ago romantic and fancy legend spinners gave it the name of Lover's Leap and assured the doubting Thomases, that it was the same rock off which love sick Indian couples used to hurl themselves into the blue waters of the Illinois river 100 feet or more below the top of the rock.

There were, among the Indians of the Illinois valley, as among the pale faces, who followed them into it, couples forbidden to marry under the code of morals. That of the Indians was a savage one in keeping with the numerous others of their customs such as burning at the stake, torture of running the gantlet.

In such cases a long jump into the river may have seemed the easier way out to such couples.



Robert Cavalier De LaSalle
Prince of American Explorers
Courtesy of Illinois State Historical Society

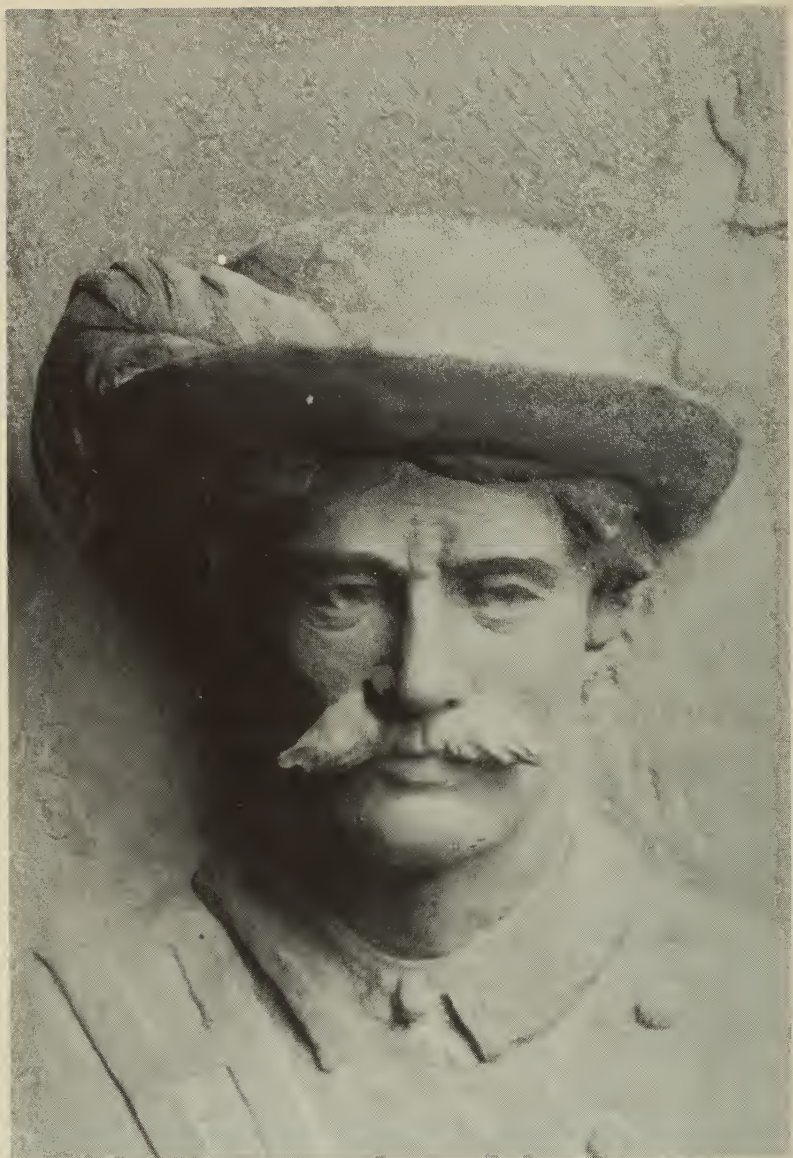
GENTLEMAN OF FRANCE

ACROSS the pages of time, there flashes now and then a restless spirit, a wandering spirit, one fired by ambition and consumed by that same ambition and who leaves the world richer for his work, but ends it all in the bleakest of personal tragedy.

Such was Robert Cavalier Sieur de LaSalle, a gentleman of France, who claimed the heart of an empire for his monarch, a colonial empire which other kings who followed Louis XIV allowed to slip from their grasp into the hands of England, their ancient rival.

The Kings of England were no wiser than their counter parts across in France, across the English channel. They held the center of an immensely rich continent for less than a quarter of a century and saw it slip into the hands of a young and struggling nation born of the inspired work and belief in the equality of man and hardship in battle of a long string of colonies, that reached from the northern mountains and lakes of Vermont and New Hampshire down along the Atlantic seaboard through the river valleys of New York and Pennsylvania, the tobacco fields of Virginia and the rice fields and pine woods of the Carolinas and Georgia.

The routine of daily masses and prayers, the long study to reach the goal of the priesthood and the life of such a spiritual leader in a small town parish of 17th century France—these were not meant for the restless spirit that was LaSalle.



Henry Tonty, "The Man with the Iron Hand." Italian explorer and trusted lieutenant of LaSalle. From relief head in Marquette Building, Chicago, Illinois.
Courtesy of Illinois State Historical Society.

So, when still in his early 20's LaSalle said farewell to the Jesuit seminary in France, where he had been a student, took his small allowance from his family and set out for Canada, another of the goodly company of explorers and Jesuits and Franciscans, who were destined to play such an important role at old Starved Rock.

It was a grand scheme, that youthful LaSalle had in mind—to set up a chain of forts in the heart of the continent that would shut off the westward expansion of the British colonies adding beyond measure to the wealth and domain of his beloved France and at the same time enrich his own fortune.

LaSalle, in the words of Shakespeare, lacked the quality of character to bind men to him with hoops of steel. Courageous, but cold of character he was a good foil for his loyal companion, Henry Tonti, the man with the "Iron Hand" whose charitable attitude towards lonely men in the wilderness made them as loyal to him as to the real leader of the many expeditions led by LaSalle up and down the valley of the Illinois, from 1679 to 1683.

Those four years are among the most significant in middle western colonial history. They established the lillies of France in the valleys of Illinois and the Mississippi, saw the planting of the first French colonies in the state, saw the Indians gather in numbers up to 20,000 or more for protection under the guns of Fort St. Louis built on old Starved Rock in 1682-83. They saw the beginning of law, the white man's law, in the land of the Illini, saw the first business deals in real estate and in the fur trade made out on the Rock, saw the Indian change swiftly from one who had been on his own resources for unknown centuries to one dependent partly on the white man for barter, for aid against his enemies and saw him adopt, in many cases, the religious beliefs of the pale face instead of sticking to his own pagan rites.

LaSalle, then, at 23 set himself up with a grant of land at Montreal Island, Canada, called LaChine by some in derision because in all his wanderings he was like others—he could not find a direct and shorter route to China. That was the goal of the explorers of his day—and none succeeded. The China trade in silks and spices and other luxuries was a lucrative one for traders and ship owners and was eagerly sought as a way to wealth.

A tribe of wandering Senecas paid him a visit one winter and told him of a great river "Oyo, eight moons away that empties into the sea."

That set LaSalle off on a two year trip, still veiled in mystery. Apparently he discovered the Ohio. He may have found the Illinois and the Mississippi, but all this is conjecture—nothing is certain. His plantation, LaChine, was sold in 1669 to a Seminary at Montreal, which financed his two year trip, starting with four canoes and 14 men to find the Ohio. Parkman in, "LaSalle and the Discovery of the East" doubts that LaSalle saw the Mississippi, but he certainly knew well the lay out of the mid-west from his two year trip. France based her claims to the heart of the continent on his explorations.

He knew the routes from the Lakes to the Illinois river, from some source, even before Marquette and Joliet used them for the first time in the summer and fall of 1673.

Back in Canada in 1672 LaSalle attached himself to Governor Frontenac waiting for his grand scheme to materialize.

That was to set up the French forts in a strategic position, then claim the midwest beyond the Alleghenies for France, drift down the Illinois

and the Mississippi to the gulf coast and there bolster the French claim again. Then the seat of French government in North America could be transferred from cold inhospitable Canada to the fertile Mississippi valley. French colonies would then be established, trade and commerce would flourish and France would have a vastly rich empire in North America to add to her Canadian possessions.

Louis the Magnificent took time out from the gay life of the French court, its quadrilles and its idlers and sycophants to listen to the grand scheme of LaSalle in 1674. Louis nodded his head in approval, called for quill and parchment and drew up the royal order approving the designs of LaSalle and also making LaSalle a noble for what he had already done.

He moved swiftly now, with a land grant given him at Fort Frontenac (now Kingston, Ontario) along with trading rights on Lake Ontario and in the distant land of the Illinois Indians which he was determined to explore.

Fort Conti on the Niagara river was built to control that portage against enemies.

Axes rang and trees crashed all one summer, that of 1679, when he built the Griffon, the first sailing vessel on the Great Lakes. Indians fled in terror into the thick timber, when she spread her white sails on August 7, 1679 and set out for distant Mackinac in far northern Michigan and then to Green Bay, Wisconsin. At Mackinac, he left his boon companion, Tonti, with 20 men to build a trading post, then proceeded south along the eastern shores of Lake Michigan to the mouth of the St. Joseph river. LaSalle was to go to Green Bay, The Griffon loaded with furs was to go to Niagara to unload, then return to Fort St. Joseph with supplies.

But the Griffon vanished and was never heard from again. That was only the beginning of the troubles of LaSalle.

LaSalle had a party of 14 men with him including the Franciscan fathers, Louis Hennepin and Zenobe Membre, and Gabriel de la Ribourde, the latter then 65 years old and destined with Membre to die at the hands of Indians. His men fell to with axes and Fort Miami was built, the third of his projected chain of forts in the wilderness. That gave him the key to Illinois via the Kankakee river. November 12, 1679, Tonti arrived with his grim message, that the Griffon had never reached Niagara or even Mackinac. LaSalle waited for the balance of Tonti's men to arrive at the fort.

Instructions were nailed to trees, to the master of the Griffon and her crew as to his plans and where he had gone.

December 3, 1679 LaSalle and his force of 29 men set out for the Illinois and Mississippi in bitter weather through land filled with dreary and icy marshes. The Indians had fired the prairies in the fall—the game had been driven away. Hunger and cold assailed the explorers. A buffalo mired in the muddy marsh along the Illinois met a sudden end and provided badly needed meat.

The mouth of the Fox river at Ottawa—the Indians called it Pesticoui—was passed, then Buffalo Rock, that mighty mass of yellow sand stone, west of Ottawa on the north side of the Illinois river. Then Starved Rock was reached, its oak and pines clad in the snow of winter. Marquette and Joliet had passed the same great rock for the first time, when it was cloaked in its early fall colors and the second time, when it wore the soft livery of early spring. Now LaSalle saw it stripped of all greenery or brilliant color, as winter clutched the land with icy hands. Marquette and Joliet on each of their trips had found the great Indian villages of

Kaskaskia or LaVantum, as the French called it, teeming with hundreds of Indians, naked children and slinking cur dogs some of which wound up in the stew pot as the explorers found. They politely declined it, and with equal politeness on the part of their hosts were then offered some of the "Fat of the Land," that came from the deer and the buffalo, then roaming Illinois and, literally, were as well clad with fat in their way as the porkers of the white man in the same valley in the twentieth century.

LaSalle and his party, cold and hungry Frenchman, found the rows of bark huts housing 4,000 to 5,000 Indians, usually 6 families to a hut, deserted. No blue wood smoke came from the dark and ill smelling cabins, there was no chatter of men or women in the village streets, no shouts of children at play, no cur dogs roamed through the idle streets. The Indians were off on a winter hunting trip.

Desperate for food LaSalle and his men raided the corn pits of the Indians and for payment left a supply of gifts without which no explorer went among the Indians. The women loved the white man's finery of beads and baubles as well as the warriors relished the axes and tobacco and other goods which they could not produce themselves.

The silent village of the Kaskaskia, when LaSalle first saw it, was a grim forecast of the scene of horror, that he was to look on in the same sprawling camp, less than a year in the future after the Iroquois had been on there savage raid.

Were it not recorded history the labors of LaSalle in the Illinois and Mississippi valleys over a period of several years would seem incredible for their long journey, some by foot, some by canoe, some through the heat of the summer and others in the dead of a North American winter.

New Years day 1680 Father Hennepin offered a mass and extended greeting to the concourse of Frenchmen in the lonely wilderness and LaSalle then resumed his journey down the Illinois to what is now Peoria.

Somewhere along Peoria Lake, called by the Indians "Pimeteoui" or a "Place of Many Fat Beasts." LaSalle found a village of 80 lodges of the Illinois.

LaSalle and the sachems smoked the pipe of peace and exchanged gifts. LaSalle made known his plans to build a "big canoe" to go down the Mississippi.

Trouble arrived with a Mascoutin chief, who hinted that LaSalle was a spy for the dreaded Iroquois. LaSalle wormed himself back into the good graces of the Illini, but half a dozen of his men on whom he depended for aid in building his ship took to the tall timber. With his usual characteristic energy he started to build Fort Crevecoeur or "Broken Heart" with its storehouses and huts for his workmen. Again the axes rang in the wilderness as he started work on his proposed "Big Canoe" to float down the Illinois and Mississippi.

In six weeks the keel was laid, but no ship could sail without cordage or sails and they were in distant Canada. LaSalle set out for Canada to get them. Father Hennepin, Michael Ako and Anthony Augel were directed to go up the Mississippi on a trip which Hennepin made famous in his account of the journey to the Falls of St. Anthony.

March 1st found LaSalle enroute to Canada through a land where winter was breaking up and snow, sleet and rain were common. March 10th they were back in the Indian village south of Utica to rest for a few days.

He bargained with Chassagouc, mighty chief of the Illini for a canoe load of corn to be sent down the river to Tonti at Fort Grevercour. Then LaSalle took a look at Starved Rock and determined to change his base of operations up river to LeRocher, as he called it, from Fort Crevecour. At Fort Miami two of his men, were told to go down river to Tonti and tell him of LaSalle's decision.

Fortified and garrisoned with troops, it could command the Illinois and control the water route from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi against enemies. It could be made a bastion of defense for the Illinois Indians and their friends and a good base for the fur trade for hundreds of miles around.

May 6 LaSalle was back on his home ground at Fort Frontenac, after a journey of 1,000 miles through frozen wilderness, down river and back, a trip that would have exhausted the strength or spirit of a man less determined to carry out his plans than this gentleman of France.

More disastrous news waited LaSalle at Frontenac. Messengers told him more of Tonti's men had taken to the tall timber, had wrecked the Fort and stolen his goods. Others told him the same scoundrels had pillaged Fort Miami, rifled Fort Conti at Niagara, seized his furs at Mackinac and that some of them were on their way to Frontenac with murder in their hearts.

LaSalle learned also that a ship from France with cargo of goods for his colony and 20 men for the same purpose had been wrecked in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Enemies had stirred up his creditors against him. It was a disheartening prospect that he faced now. But still he would not throw up the sponge—he straightened matters out. His mutinous crew were captured and sent to Frontenac for sentence by the Governor—a pair were shot resisting arrest.

In the heat of early August, LaSalle and a party of 24 men and his lieutenant, Francois de la Forest, set out once again for Fort Crevecour or, more properly LeRocher, where he expected to find Tonti, with the Fort built on top of the great Rock.

It was late in November, 1680 when they reached LeRocher and the great village of the Illini. But there were no battlements on top of the Rock, no sign that one had been started, no word of the presence of Tonti. LaSalle was alarmed at the absence of Tonti, his faithful lieutenant, in so many long journeys and hardships of the Illinois wilderness. It was soon evident, looking at the ruins of the Illinois village and the cold camps of the Iroquois, what had happened since he last set foot in the camp.

Buzzards wheeled lazily in the autumn sky, the ominous sign of the disaster for wherever these ugly birds were seen there has been death in one form or another. The dogs slinked through the ruins of the burned and destroyed huts, there was everywhere the odor of death and the awful evidence of the fury of the Iroquois attack on the village of the Illinoi.

Corpses lay everywhere, some of children, their brains beaten out with clubs, men had been clubbed or speared to death. Women were sprawled in death trying to protect their papooses. Old men and withered crones, unable to protect themselves had fallen an easy victim to the Iroquois. The once busy village streets, that had hummed with life, now were avenues of violent death. Graves had been ripped open and bodies desecated. In short the Iroquois had shown themselves, once more to be among the most savage and cruellest of all American tribes.

LaSalle left some of his men at LeRocher, while he descended the Illinois in a fruitless search for his apparently lost friend, Tonti, and the Franciscan priests Membre and De la Ribourde who had been with LaSalle. The search was fruitless; sadly LaSalle retraced his trail up the Illinois once more, past the ruined Illinois village, near LeRocher, where he picked up the men he had left there, and set out in rigorous winter weather to Fort Miami. There they found LaForest with planks and timber for a new vessel to sail the Great Lakes and replace the lost Griffon.

Where was Tonti all this time? He had gone up river to examine LeRocher. More of his men had skipped out on him, as said, leaving him with three loyal ones and the two priests. Tonti with this faithful handful had lived with the Indians at LeRocher until September 1680. It was about September 10th, that a Shawnee arrived with the terrible news, that a party of Iroquois was hidden in the thick timber along the Big Vermillion or Aramoni river, west of LeRocher and the Indian camp. Now Tonti was in deadly danger of his life—the Illinois accused him of being a spy, for the dreaded Iroquois. He advanced to meet the Iroquois, when the battle was joined between that tribe and the Illinois on the plain, west of LeRocher, and the Indian camp below Utica on the Illinois.

One warrior plunged a knife into the breast of Tonti, another thoughtfully looked over his scalp for a souvenir. Some debated what to do with him as a friend of the French and Illinois. It was the question of tying him to a stake or turning him loose, to still another action of the painted and ferocious Iroquois. Finally the wounded Tonti, weak from loss of blood was directed to go to the camp of the Illinois and tell them the Iroquois were "friends of the Governor of France" and wanted only peace. Tonti warned the Illinois the Iroquois were not to be trusted.

The more timid of the Illinois burned their lodges, took their women and children off the island, where they had been placed for safety and skipped for safety down the river.

Two days later the Iroquois proposed peace and gave Tonti skins to induce him to leave. Tonti kicked them away with supreme contempt for the offer. But he could do no more for the already doomed Illinois Indians. He accepted an offer of safe conduct from the Iroquois, for himself and the two friars, Membre and LeRibourde, and set off up the Illinois in a leaky canoe partly laden with furs. That was September 18, 1680. The next day the canoe leaked so badly it was beached at what is now Seneca, 25 miles east of LeRocher. Here Father de la Ribourde went into the forest to pray, against the advice of those with him. He was never seen alive again by the white men.

The story is told that the Kickapoos fell on him with wooden head-knockers and left the 65 year old priest dead in the woods, where his body was never found.

As was LaSalle, he was a gentleman of France, son and heir of a nobleman of Burgundy. His piety and devotion to his church were known throughout Canada for which he gave up his old home, friends and finally his life.

The first death among the missionaries, who had toiled in the Illinois, his fate was meted out to Father Membre in Texas, in 1689, to Father James Gravier from wounds at the hands of the Indians on the Mississippi Gulf coast in 1708 and to Father Sebastian Ralse a 1,000 miles from the Illinois valley at the hands of the Indians and English settlers in Maine, in 1724.

Meanwhile the slaughter had gone on at the village of the Illinois. One tribe, the Tamoreas, had been slow or reluctant to flee and on these the Iroquois fell like fiends wiping out the tribe. Those who had left Kaskaskia ahead of the Iroquois escaped some of the worst of the slaughter.

Now back to LaSalle and his movements again comparable only to those of his earlier years in the great valley of the Illinois. Uppermost in his mind was the formation of some confederation among the scattered tribes of the midwest, which, allied with the remaining Illinois would fend off any further raids by the ferocious Iroquois. That was done at Fort Miami, where he spent the winter of 1681-82. Allied now with the Illini were the remnants of the Abenakis and Mohegans fleeing westward from the bloody horrors of King Phillip's war in distant Massachusetts and remnants also of the Shawnees and the Miamis, victims of the Iroquois.

In March, 1681, he set out again for the ruined town of the Illinois at Starved Rock. A band of Foxes told him Tonti still lived and that Hennepin and Ako had come back from the land of the Sioux. The Illini were urged to smoke the pipe of peace, with the Miami for the protection of both. But another trip back to Montreal was necessary to pacify his creditors and get more supplies and credit.

That done LaSalle, Father Membre, 30 Frenchmen and 100 of his allied Indians set out for the Illinois country reaching Fort Miami in November 1681. A rest of a month followed and the party resumed its trip December 21, 1681 with LaSalle, Tonti, Father Membre, D'Autray, lieutenants of LaSalle, 23 Frenchmen and Indian braves, squaws and children—54 people in all. They struggled through icy waste until, open water was reached at Peoria Lake. April 6, 1682 the goal of the long standing ambitions of LaSalle was reached. His relentless work through one hardship and disaster after another could not but help he recalled as the triumph of a man determined to do what he started to perform. That was to plant the lillies of France on the Gulf coast of the Mississippi and take possession of a mighty empire in the heart of a continent for Louis XIV.

A column was erected with words "Louis le Grand, Roy de France et de Navarre, regne le neuvieme April 1682." LaSalle took possession of the river and all that it drained, a huge territory from the Rockies to the Alleghanies, from sunny Louisiana to the great northern forests of distant Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan 1500 miles north and south and another 1500 miles east and west.

But even a man with the strength and the courage of LaSalle was bound to feel the effects of so many long and exhausting journeys through the wilderness. He fell ill on the arduous trip back up the Mississippi and did not reach Fort Miami until August and Mackinac in September. Father Membre was sent to Europe to tell the King that LaSalle has claimed the Mississippi valley for the empire. Aboard the same sailing ship was Count Frontenac, the loyal backer of LaSalle and his ambitions, who had been relieved of his command by LeFebvre de la Barre, an enemy of LaSalle. Intrigue once more had been made against him.

It was December 1682, when LaSalle again reached LeRocher. There he and Tonti and the other Frenchmen felled trees to make a palisaded Fort out of the top of the Rock as a bastion of empire for the French colony, he proposed to found in the Mississippi valley a bastion of defense for the allied Indians against more incursions of the Iroquois. What this palisade looked like on top of what is now Starved Rock is told

by LaSalle of which this part is taken from Magry Decouvertes establishments 11, 175, 76. It follows: "Below it was the ancient village of the Kaskaskias, who abandoned it since the raid caused three years ago by the Iroquois. The news of the Fort, which I have built there, has called them back together with other nations. It is situated on the left in descending the river on the height of a rock precipitious on almost all sides, whose base the river laves in such a manner, that one can draw up water from it to the summit of the Rock, which is about six hundred feet in circumference. It is accessible only on one side, on which the ascent is still quite difficult. This side is barred by a palisade of stakes of white oak from eight to ten inches in diameter and 22 feet high, flanked by three redoubts of square beams, placed upon the other equidistantly, so that the two sustain each other. The rest of the enclosure of the rock is surrounded by a like palisade but only 15 feet high, because it is inaccessible. There is also a parapet of thick trees lying lengthwise the one upon the other to a height of two men, the other covered with earth and at the top of the palisade a kind of chevaux-de-frise, the points of which are ironed tipped to prevent scaling. The neighborhood rocks are all lower than this line and the nearest is two hundred feet distant, the others more, between which and the Fort of St. Louis ends on two sides a large dale which a brook traverses and inundates when it rains."

Now Fort St. Louis was finished. It was to look down on 20,000 or more Indians in their bark lodges strung along the river. By some historians it is claimed to be the first white habitation of permanence in the whole Mississippi valley. Here D' Autry was granted land by LaSalle, but was not fortunate enough to enjoy his patrimony more than a few years, when he met death at the hands of Indians, the year after LaSalle met the same fate at the hands of his own treacherous workmen.

Once again the squaws labored in the corn and bean fields, the warriors loafed or boasted of their exploits in battle to visiting delegations. Naked children ran through the streets and the usually large population of cur dogs multiplied without distinction as to blood lines, contrary to the dog fanciers creed of to-day. LaSalle was content for the time being. The seat of his seigniorship would be here. He was surrounded with Frenchmen, he could deal out land to his favorites. Even the usually taciturn Tonti commented that it was a charming country, as one might anywhere see, "A great plain adorned with trees and abounding in strange fruits, buffalo and deer were plentiful; game fish and birds abounded.

Far away Governor LaBarre on his "high-horse" now was doing all he could to undermine LaSalle and his plans. Supplies for LaSalle were held up or not sent, his fur traders were way laid by agents of LaBarre. That worthy sent word to the French court and the tongues wagged and clacked against LaSalle among the bewigged dandies, their women and their fancy women, both always masters of intrigue.

Matters became so bad that LaSalle in the early fall of 1683, when the first wild geese were asking for the best routes south, accompanied by vast flocks of wild ducks, bound the same trackless way, determined to go back to Canada and to France to "settle the hash" of LaBarre. Also in his mind was the old ambition to found his larger colony in the Mississippi valley; then he could again defy his enemies to do their worst against him. That was after LaBarre had sent him an official order to surrender Fort St. Louis to one de Bauges in league, of course, with LaBarre.

LaSalle now was to look for the last time on Fort St. Louis and its great Indian camp. He left them a farewell note telling them to obey all

orders given them no matter how hard or unreasonable they seemed to be, and that he would be back in the spring of 1684 to greet them again. Then they would broach the barrel of whiskey, which was to be saved for his return. Tonti was to remain at the Fort and they were to follow his counsel as the agent of LaSalle and to gather buffalo skins and beaver skins for trade.

Once more tongues clacked in the gay court of Louis the Great in Paris but this time LaSalle, no mean figure in such a place, set them whispering first, then speaking openly against LaBarre and his intrigues. The King of France rebuked LaBarre by sending LaForest, then in France to reoccupy both Fort St. Louis and Fort Miami. LaSalle travelled through out France rounding up peasants and artisans willing to leave their hearth and go to the distant French colony of the Mississippi.

The expedition got under way from the harbor of LaRochelle in 1684 under the command, while at sea, of Captain Beaujeau. Friction developed among the volatile French. A storm drove them far out of their course so they were forced to land on the coast of what is now Texas.

Misery, treachery, hardship, murder and the breaking up of the colony marked this last ill fated venture of LaSalle.

LaSalle started to search for the mouth of the Mississippi, up which he could lead the colonists to the distant Fort St. Louis more than 1,000 miles away.

The malcontents of the colony fell on him took his life on March 19, 1687 and left him without even a grave. His nephew, his faithful Shawnee scout, and his servant fell to the same villainous crew.

Thus, said Osman in his "Last of a Great Indian Tribe" in the vigor of his manhood at the age of 43, "died Robert Cavalier Suer de LaSalle and the heroic age of Canada came to an end". Tonti is quoted by the same author saying, "Behold the fate of one of the greatest men in the age of wonderful ability and capable of accomplishing any enterprise."

More murders followed, father Membre among them, La Forest and Boiron, another friend of LaSalle. A few escaped to France with the fleet of colony vessels. The Spanish captured others. The Abbe Cavalier, brother of LaSalle, Douay and Joutel, commander of the soldiers attached to the planned colony finally reached Fort St. Louis on their way back to France.

MAPS AND CANOES

MUCH has been made of LaSalle and Marquette and justly so, for their part in the French history of the Illinois and Mississippi valleys, but each had a loyal companion, who in their own way, left a rich legacy of history and toil as did Marquette, companion to Joliet, and LaSalle companion to Tonti. Each travelled thousands of miles through out the great valleys of what is now the richest part of central America in one trip after another.

Take first the case of Tonti, known to the Indians as the man with the "Iron Hand", who did not hesitate, when necessity demanded it, to use it, on the person of the refractory Indians to keep them in line, with his orders or those of LaSalle. Literally it was an iron hand. He had lost the original in battle in Europe before he met LaSalle in France and attached himself to that gentleman of France for the balance of the life of LaSalle.

Where Tonti was born is not certain. Some historians maintain he was a native of Italy, others lean to the belief he was a native of France. He has been mentioned many times in the chapter the "Gentleman of France." Now we find him in part command of Fort St. Louis in the spring of 1684. Rumors came through the wilderness that the Iroquois were once again en route to "drink the blood and eat the flesh of the Illinois" as they had done in September 1680.

This time they met a Tartar in Tonti, who had no love and little respect for these blood thirsty devils, from the east. Tonti and his co-commander, de Baugy, were ready for the attack. It came March 21, 1684 and lasted six days. The roar of Indian battle resounded over the wide Illinois and through the timber land where the first of the spring wild flowers were peering through the swampy muck of the sodden hill sides. The Iroquois were beaten back nursing their wounds and probably carrying their dead and injured, with them to prevent their desecration or torture by the warriors of the Illini and their allies.

Tonti was called to Quebec and was told that he was to command Fort St. Louis. On his return he found the Illinois and the Miami about ready to swing the war clubs at each other. That trouble required settling, which may have been done with the aid of the "Iron Hand" in a literal sense.

Worried now by the non-appearance of LaSalle at Fort St. Louis, Tonti set out for the Gulf of Mexico, 1000 miles away to find his lost companion. That was a fruitless piece of work on his part, which lasted from April to early September 1686. He left a letter for LaSalle, which was given to a chief of the Mougoulockes, a tribe that lived 100 miles above modern New Orleans.

The survivors of LaSalle's ill fated expedition from France, which was to found a colony for him, had deceived Tonti on their arrival at Fort St. Louis. They told Tonti that LaSalle still lived, when in fact he had been murdered. They stayed the winter, after which Tonti and he loaned them 700 francs to get back to France. It was not until the fall of 1688, that Tonti learned the bitter truth about LaSalle and the manner of his death. It was December 1689, when he made another trip down the Mississippi in vain, again, to find the killers of his lost chief. He was gone then until September, 1690.

Tonti was commander of Fort St. Louis from 1690 to 1698 and controlled the key post in the colonial dreams of LaSalle as said by Monsignor Thomas A. Meehan S. J. in his booklet, "Man with the Iron Hand".

He had little money and less influence at the court of France, but continually tried to stir interest in official circles and among the people of France to found colonies in the Mississippi valley.

He made a notary account in 1693 to his partner, LaForest, for 3,893 livres (French currency) in good beaver at the current prices within two years. He hired voyageurs to carry supplies to Fort St. Louis and bring back the furs gathered by the Indians and French trappers.

The edict of the King of France in 1691 said that white men were prohibited from trading west of Montreal, but Tonti and LaForest were excepted from the order. But their trade was so restricted by the royal order as to leave them little profit. Tonti spent the last four years of his life in the Mississippi gulf coast, where D'Iberville had founded his French colony. His death there was from fever in 1704.

Of the greatness of Tonti, Monsignor Meehan wrote; "He was possibly one of the greatest and most unselfish men who ever trod the soil of

Illinois. He was loved, feared and respected by the Indians. He had endurance that few men had, and absolute fearlessness and bravery was a counterpart of him. He was loyal to LaSalle and later to the point of death to D'Iberville. Finally, as testimony shows, he had deeply religious convictions. Few men in history have had so many admirable qualities to such a high degree.

Some idea of what his contemporaries thought of him is gleaned from a letter of Father St. Cosme. "He is the man who knows best these regions; he has twice gone down to the sea, he has been far inland to the most remote tribes and is beloved and feared everywhere. If it be desired to have discoveries made in this country I don't think the task could be provided to a more experienced man." That is the case for Tonti, who knew the wilderness as did few men of his time. Now for that of his predecessor Louis Jolliet, as he spelled his name.

Unlike the other French explorers and priests, who wrote so much history in the Illinois valley, he was a native of North America. His birthplace was near Quebec, September 1645 and at 10 he was a student in a Jesuit school. His minor orders as a Jesuit were conferred by Bishop Laval in 1662, but like LaSalle and Marquette, the hum drum life of a priest in a little town was not for him. He spent a year or so in France, then next appears at the Soo in Michigan in June 1671, in a ceremony complete with Indians, priests, soldiers and a handful of government dignitaries of Canada, when the north country was claimed for France before LaSalle did the same 1,500 miles to the south on the Gulf coast.

A year later, Joliet was commissioned by Talon of the Canadian royal government, to start search for the Mississippi and its mouth. That led to his hook up with Marquette, the young Jesuit missionary, who had been stationed in what is now Northern Michigan.

Their voyages up and down the Illinois and the founding of the first Christian Mission at Utica by Marquette in 1675 have been told.

After the death of Marquette, Joliet was married the same year and settled down to go into business and raise a family near Quebec. His eldest son was born in 1676. His petition to go back to the Illinois valley on a voyage of exploration was denied by the royal government. But in 1689 he was mapping the wilderness of the Labradorian coast. He also mapped the Gulf of St. Lawrence at the order of the French government as an aid to navigation. His death was in 1700 and his burial place is unknown.

Joliet found the valley of the Illinois, a beautiful place filled with game and fish, where he believed it would be easy for settlers to make their living; of the valley he wrote:

"The river which we have christened St. Louis rises near the lower end of the lake of the Illinois (Lake Michigan) and seemed to me the most beautiful and most suitable for settlement.

"At the place where we entered the lake is a harbor convenient for receiving vessels and sheltering them from the wind. The river is wide and deep abounding in catfish and sturgeon.

"For the distance of 80 leagues, not a quarter hour passes without seeing game, which is abundant in these parts, oxen, cows, stags, does and turkeys are found there in much greater numbers than elsewhere.

"There are prairies 3, 6, 10 and 20 leagues long and three wide surrounded by forests of the same extent, beyond these the prairies begin again, so that there is much of one sort of land as of the other. Some of

the grass is very short, some grows as high as six feet, hemp grows wild here and reaches a height of eight feet.

"A settler would not have to spend 10 years cutting and burning trees. On the very day of his arrival he could put his plow into the ground. And if he had no oxen from France, he could use those of this country or even on which western Indians ride, as we do on horses. After sowing grains of all kinds a settler could devote himself to planting trees and grafting fruit trees, to tanning hides, with which to make shoes and with the wool of the oxen (buffalo) he could make finer clothes than that brought from France.

"Thus he could easily find in the country, his food and his clothing and nothing could be wanting except salt; however by taking proper steps it should not be difficult to remedy that deficiency."

It was Joliet, with the trained eye of the explorer and the map makers, who with Marquette, first saw the possibilities of a waterway, that would link the Great Lakes with the Father of Waters, far to the west. Of it he wrote: "We could easily sail ships to Florida. All that needs to be done is to dig a canal through half a league of prairie from the lower end of Lake Michigan to the river of St. Louis—which empties into the Mississippi, which the ship could easily descend to the Gulf of Mexico.

SIEGE AND SLAUGHTER

WOMEN screamed in horror and children yelled in terror as the knife, the tomahawk, the spear and the war club did their deadly work on the night of September 8, 1730.

Historians are agreed on the date—but still argue as to the site of the siege of the Fox Indians by their enemies, the Sauks and a band of French soldiers. Many sites have been suggested by students of French colonial history. None agree and it remains to this day a fascinating riddle with part of the story centered around Starved Rock long before the siege started.

The Foxes were the "scourge of the forest" a rough and tough tribe, well able to take care of themselves in the endless and savage war-far, that was so common in Illinois before and after the coming of the white man.

They preyed on the French, stole their furs, enroute to be sold, and left the owners scalped and dead in the wilderness. The Illini were a favorite target of the Foxes to be slaughtered or roasted at the stake as captives.

But the Illini in all this savagery, did not wear the wings of angels or the mein of saints. They were cruel and vengeful also. One source of early Illinois history say they captured a nephew of Oushala, head man of the Foxes, and made of him a burnt offering at the stake.

The war drums beat in fury in the Fox camps. Word of the outrage perpetrated by the Illini went out to the allies of the Foxes—the Macaoutins, the Kickapoos, the Winnebagoes, the Sauks and even the distant Sioux and Abenakies.

The Fox warriors had nothing more to do than take to the warpath. The squaws could look after the crops as they did anyway.

So the allied warriors in 1722 gathered at the base of old Starved Rock and drove some of the Peorias, part of the Illini confederation, to the top of the Rock, expecting them to starve to death.



Starved Rock as seen from the Illinois River.

But the Foxes found a tartar on their hands. The Peorias had no desire to have their scalps hung on a warpole in a Fox village. They battled back and the Foxes lost six men to each of the Peoria tribe's one.

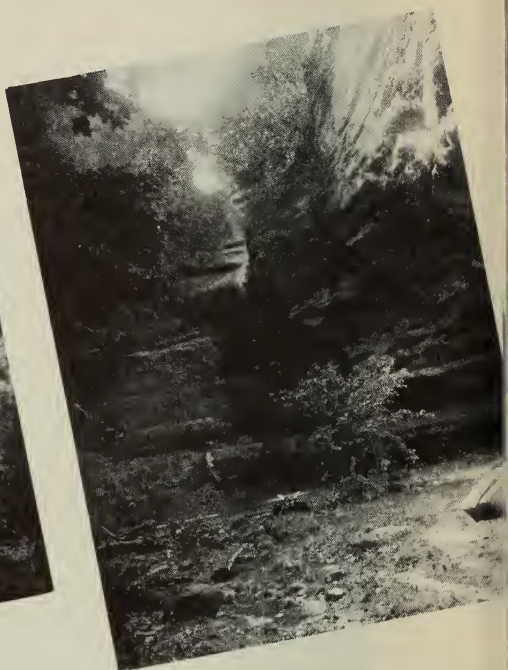
Word of the latest war between the Foxes and the Illini set the French army commanders in the west to tearing their hair and a force of troops was started from Fort Chartres in southwestern Illinois to Starved Rock or Fort St. Louis as it was then known.

Before they arrived the Foxes had lifted the siege and sought the favor of the French for doing so. The Peorias freed of their potential death trap, scuttled for a safer place along the Mississippi and the Foxes took over their lands.

The Foxes continued their depredations against the French fur traders and courier de bois. Finally the government of Canada determined to wipe out the Foxes, men, women and children, to make the fur trade safe for the Canadian dealer.

How it was to be done was of no great concern to the royal government. It could conveniently look the other way, if the helpless mem-

BEAUTIFUL STARVED ROCK



Archaeologists at v
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STARVED ROCK STATE PARK

Starved Rock State Park—one of the most beautiful, scenic spots in the entire Midwest — water falls, canyons and rock formations dot its 1850 acres. Shown here are typical views.



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ation—many skele-
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bers of a tribe, the women and the children met death by siege or in a fiendish way devised by the Foxes. The important thing was to wipe them out.

St. Ange, commander of the French troops at Fort Chartres, was ordered to start a force of soldiers and Sauk Indians north to intercept the Foxes.

The Foxes got wind of the dispatch of about 500 enemies against them and supposedly started east to seek asylum from their friends, the Iroquois.

Just where they were trapped by the Sauks and French is the matter of dispute by historians.

W. R. Foster of Ottawa, who from 1906 to 1946 was LaSalle county superintendent of schools, had no peer as a student of early day history and legends of northern Illinois suggested, logically, that the Foxes split into bands to keep from being annihilated and that more than one band may have been trapped.

The late Bishop Joseph H. Schlarman of Peoria, believed the Foxes were trapped in eastern Illinois, south of Chicago. Other historians, with less proof, even placed it on Covel Creek near Ottawa and Starved Rock.

The late Stanley Faye, another competent student of colonial and Indian history in Illinois in the October 1935 issue of the Illinois State Historical Society quarterly, placed the siege on the Vermillion River, north of Lowell and about five miles south of Starved Rock.

W. C. Brigham, retired McLean county superintendent of schools, contended the Foxes were trapped near Arrowsmith, east of Bloomington.

In the 1900's John Steward of Plano, spent much time in Paris as agent for a harvester company, by whom he was employed. His interest in early Illinois history led him to search the old French colonial records of the late 17th and early 18th centuries in Illinois.

From these records he deduced the Foxes were trapped near the famous old Indian village of Meramech, about two miles south of Plano. There Little Rock and Big Rock creeks, one on the east and the other on the west of a low bluff, joins at the south side of the bluff. Steward bought two acres or so of the top of the bluff and deeded it to the Plano schools. Then he marked the top with native boulders at the site of the "rifle pits" and "trenches" "used by the besiegers".

Where ever the Foxes were chased to the top of the bluff and held out against their enemies in the waning summer days of 1730, they were not annihilated, as the Sauks and French believed they would be.

The Sauks had been friends and allies of the Foxes for unknown years. Now they turned on the French and secretly aided the Foxes by passing them weapons, etc. The French soldiers did some grumbling about the matter, too, as their own supplies ran short and it appeared they would be there for an indefinite time. Even the hum drum of a garrison life was preferable to being stuck in the wilderness trying to wear out a band of stubborn Indians by siege.

The siege broken, the massacre done, and some of the luckier Foxes outdistancing their enemies, as they fled, enough Foxes survived to keep the race alive.

A century later they took part in the three months Black Hawk war of northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin marked by cruelty on the part of the Indians, defending lands against the encroachment of the whites, and by equally vicious tactics on the part of the white soldiers.

RETREAT FROM CANADA

HE could see it all now, the disgrace and humiliation to his small body of troops as something that was inevitable unless he took swift action to avoid it.

A long file of British troops, in their scarlet uniforms, would be at rigid attention, their faces masking their jubilation as best they could in a soldierly fashion.

Facing them would be a long file of French troops at equally rigid attention, only their soldierly training, as with the British masking their true feelings. But a twitching of the lips and a lifting of the eye brow would tell more than words.

There would be sharp commands and the fleur-de-lis of France would come fluttering down off the tall flag staff. Another sharp command would be barked and the Union Jack would go to the top of the pole. There might be some martial airs to go with the ceremony, then crisp orders and the troops would march off to their barracks, the British to toast their conquest of Canada, the French to mourn the loss of half a continent.

There was no hesitancy in the mind of Captain Passerat de la Chappelle, only 26, a soldier of France already a veteran of many years service as to what to do when that exigency of surrendering his command to the British would take place. He would not endure it.

He would get permission from his superiors to march them to Louisiana to a place of refuge safe from the British. A journey of 2,000 miles through the winter weather of Canada and the middle west? That was a small matter, he could take supplies, build a fort and spend the winter with his command.

Some personal history of De la Chappelle is in order. He was born July 9, 1734 at the chateau of Montville in the department of Contrevez en Budget, France, and entered the army, when he was 18. Commissioned in the royal artillery, he was in Quebec in May 1756. He was in active service against the British at Fort Duquesne near Pittsburgh and May 12, 1758 was wounded in an attack on the British fort near the Potomac. The young army officer was in the battle of Quebec in 1759, when the British under Wolfe defeated the French under Montcalm and the fate of Canada was sealed—now it was to become British territory.

The story of the retreat from Canada to New Orleans to escape surrender to the British was not known to historians, until one of his descendants, the Baron de la Chappelle of Paris found documents and other historical information, which he presented to a meeting of the Societe d'histoire du Canada in 1933. It was published in the society's magazine, *Novia Francia*, and in the Mississippi Valley Historical Society and a copy was furnished the author of this publication by Ernest East of Peoria, a past president of the Illinois State Historical Society and was published in the *Daily Republican Times*, February 2, 1943, as one of the most important contributions to Illinois and LaSalle county histories in many years.

The story of the remarkable retreat of this man, his determination and endurance is too long for a publication of this sort.

He was in service at Detroit, when he was ordered September 2, 1760 to march to the aid of besieged Montreal. On the forced march east, he learned from Jesuit priests, that Montreal had surrendered. The

troops were all prisoners and all of Canada was to be turned over to the British.

Now he acted swiftly to escape surrender; with the aid of the Jesuits he was able to purchase supplies cheaply for his projected retreat to Louisiana, which was not included in the surrender to the British.

Sergeant Bellivadier was named head of the missionary department. Permission was obtained from M. de Bellestre at Detroit to leave Canada. That officer concluded with these words to de la Chappelle, "My best wishes accompany you; in spite of miseries that you will have to endure your lot is happier than mine. For I shall have the shame of surrender and turning over my command to the English and becoming their prisoner. Sad end to a career, pity me, be of good courage and the grace of God go with you."

How many men de la Chappelle had under his command is not known—it may have reached 200. He speaks of rounding up 32 Canadians and 78 half breed Ottawa Indians and French who were wandering aimlessly and also wanting to go to Louisiana to escape giving up to the British. These he added to his own force of soldiers.

The expedition built rafts on the east shore of Lake Michigan to carry its supplies and beasts across the lake to the southwest within sight of shore for safety sake. His goal through the harsh days of early winter, 1760, was Fort St. Louis, where he hoped to spend the winter in the old quarters left by the French garrison many years ago. But all he found, he related in the diary found by his descendants, was the ruins of the Fort, which had been burned long ago. The location of the Fort on the Rock, de la Chappelle decided, was not good enough to ward off any possible attack by the British, if they approached from the east.

Here de la Chappelle set his men to work in December 1760 cutting trees, building a fort and huts, the fort commanding the river for a long way to the east. The name "Fort Ottawa" was burned over the doorway of the fort.

The militia men believed they had reached Louisiana and were thus safe from the British. They asked permission of de la Chappelle to stay in the fort, while he took his command to New Orleans, which he granted them in repayment of their services as guides from Detroit to Fort Ottawa.

Game was abundant, there was an ample supply of fish in the river and skins to make clothes from deer and buffalo. From his stock of supplies de la Chappelle rationed enough for the militia men to last through the winter. Meantime he prepared for the long trip down the river, barks and sledges were built to haul in daily supplies from the forests.

The voyage by water was to be resumed by his soldiers as soon as open water prevailed. They rested, repaired shoes and uniforms.

An Indian chief presented him a relic of LaSalle, a document, wherein the Indians declared an alliance with the King of France. So de la Chappelle added his own name to the roll under that of LaSalle to continue the alliance of many years before.

When it seemed that de la Chappelle was getting matters nicely in hand at Fort Ottawa trouble brewed. December 20, 1760 M. de Clignancourt arrived at the fort as an envoy from M. de Beaujeau, former commander at Michilimackinaw, who also had shipped out for New Orleans with his troops to avoid turning the command over to the British red coats.

He was then wintering, the envoy told de la Chappelle, about 90 miles or 30 leagues west of Buffalo Rock, probably near the present Rock Island.

Death and discouragement had struck the camp, de Clignancourt told de la Chappelle. Could he spare supplies for Beaujeau and his troops?

That was agreeable to de la Chappelle, but he went along with the convoy and supplies. Beaujeau looked over the goods from Fort Ottawa, seemed pleased, and de la Chappelle rested. But when he said he was going back to Fort Ottawa, Beaujeau raged and ranted, accused de la Chappelle of being a traitor to France and ordered him to take a message to the commander at Fort Chartres. If he did not go willingly, he "would be bound like a sausage" as Beaujeau threatened and taken there against his will. So de la Chappelle went, burning as one might well do, at the ingratitude of Beaujeau, whose real motive was to take over Fort Ottawa and install his own troops in solid comfort for the winter.

The reception of de la Chappelle at Fort Chartres by the commander M. de Neyon de villiers, who even more ungrateful than that of Beaujeau. He demanded of de la Chappelle his service orders to go to New Orleans in the first place. It was explained that these were back at Fort Ottawa. Then de villiers stormed and ranted and accused his guest of being in league with the Spanish colonies and eventually, with the British. He was ordered back to Rock Island, as sort of a messenger boy, but he determined not to go that way, instead he made his way back to Fort Ottawa via horseback. The commander at Fort Chartres by then had cooled down enough to furnish him with that transportation.

Back at Fort Ottawa, de la Chappelle in January 1761, made known his intentions of leaving at once for New Orleans with his soldiers and of allowing the militia to keep the camp and what supplies that they needed.

New Orleans was reached, but the commander, M. de Kedlerrec was a brother-in-law of de Villiers. Probably he already had word of what was taking place in distant Illinois from de Villiers. Luckless de la Chappelle on reaching New Orleans was put under military arrest. He demanded an inquest and was sent to France, where the inquest cleared him of all charges and ordered him restored to his old rank as a French army captain. He was made governor of the island of Martinique in the West Indies, where he died in 1703.

More than a century after his trip from Canada through Illinois valley another de la Chappelle, also sailed from France with a member of the Peltier family, all glass makers. They settled at Ottawa, where the Peltiers first started a factory that turned out stained glass for church windows of exquisite beauty. From that business, they turned to the making of glass marbles, which produces millions of such articles per year in one of the few plants of its kind in the United States.

The de la Chappelle factory went into production of lamp chimneys, some of them of the unbreakable type through a secret process. The family was another branch of the de la Chappelles of which the soldier, who built Fort Ottawa was a member.

Jacques de la Chappelle of Chicago, a member of the Ottawa family, that made glassware says, that it is the tradition of the de la Chappelles of France, that Captain Passerat de la Chappelle played an important, but a secret part in the American revolution. It is the family story, that he was sent by the government of France to the colonies to investigate the character of a leader of the American Revolution—George Washington, before France cast her lot with the colonies against the British.

Now it was October of 1781, and once again de la Chappelle, now middle aged, could visualize a scene in his mind.

Again a long file of troops was drawn up, their real emotion hidden under a soldier's mask, but not all of it could be masked. There was a twitching in one line of the facial muscles to tell sadness. Opposite them was drawn up another file of troops, only their eyes sparkled in triumph and they stood a bit straighter, maybe, than the other dejected file. Once again a crisp order was barked. A flag fluttered down from a tall staff, again an order was barked, another flag was hoisted to the top of the pole, and sailors in the nearby harbor watched with glee. The triumphant troops marched off to their barracks to drink a toast to the day and the prisoners of war marched elsewhere in dejection. The cycle was completed now for de la Chappelle and he could drink a toast to the new nation of the United States of America, which hauled down the British colors all the way from the Atlantic coast to the Mississippi river valley, where he endured misery less than a quarter of a century before. The cycle was completed—and the French, who had surrendered Canada had taken a hand in bringing down that same British flag as allies of a new and potentially great nation born of patriotism, hardship and warfare from 1775 to 1781.

CRAGGY DEATH TRAP

ALL morning the clop, clop, of carriage horses and the sturdier tread of farm horses, each bearing visitors, had echoed through the canyons and bluffs, now clad in their early fall finery as 2,000 to 3,000 people made their way to Starved Rock early in September 1873.

They were gathering to mark the 200th anniversary of the coming of Father Marquette and Louis Joliet, first white men to look on the craggy sandstone bluffs around which so much Illinois history has revolved.

They came also to hear, from historians of the time, some of the legends, which gave it its present day name, Starved Rock and that it was there that a band of Illini Indians were presumably starved to death, in the late 1760's, by their allied enemies.

Of what actually took place, there is no written account from any of the survivors taken at a time, when their memories might still have been clearer.

Legend and fiction, some of it the product of those with fertile imaginations and no historical background, are endless on "the siege."

Picnic lunches were spread on the ground, of what is now the state park, at the base of the famous old pile of sandstone and, after that had been disposed of, the visitors settled back to hear the accounts of the historians.

The original speaker, says the Ottawa Republican, was to have been Supreme Court Justice Sidney Breese, but the judge begged off from the assignment, saying his eyesight was failing and he could not read manuscript as well as he should. The Republican editor commented tartly that Judge Breese then had no business being on the bench, if he could not read manuscript.

So the story of how the Illini Indians were trapped on the Rock, according to legend, fell to Perry Armstrong of Morris, a leading historian of his day, who wrote, "The Sauk and Black Hawk war," still a good account of the Black Hawk war of 1832, then fading from the minds of those, who had survived its terrors in the early days of LaSalle county.

Memory is the most fallible of all human faculties, a treacherous thing, a thing that is liable to mislead one into mistakes of all kinds, particularly in historical matters.



Louis Joliet
 Courtesy State Historical Society.

Quinquiesme Septembre prochain Je payeray
 Monsieur pere son paye de la somme de cent quarante
 deux livres en le d'argent de France. Vallu ven de
 Mout. Bernon, fait le present biller double Lien
 accompli L'autre c'est de Mout. Vallu. a quebec le
 27^e 8^e de july 1681.

142^e li.

Courtesy of Dr. J. E. Fields of Joliet—owner of the only known autograph of Louis Joliet in private hands, City of Joliet was named for him.

So the account of Armstrong must be taken with a lifting of one eyebrow in some respects.

He got it, he says, from one Shick Shack famous old Indian chief, of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

But Shick Shack was 104 years old, when he told the story of the siege of Starved Rock, as he recalled, it to Armstrong. The latter was nine years old, at the time (1831) and he waited 40 years to put it down in writing, which renders it suspect.

The story told by the aged chief, was that the Illini, once the mighty Indian nation of what is now a great part of Illinois, had been almost exterminated by endless wars against their enemies and by the raid on their great village opposite Starved Rock in September 1680. That was by the blood thirsty Iroquois, who also had known of their own captives being roasted alive by the Illinoi, when they were captured.

As Shick Shack told the story to Armstrong and Armstrong related it to the 2,000 to 3,000 visitors at Starved Rock on that autumn day in 1873 the combined Miamis, Kickapoos and Pottawattomies finally drove a remnant of the Illini to the top of Starved Rock late in the fall.

There they were trapped for an indefinite period, while their besiegers made themselves at home on what was known to the people of 1873 as Camp Rock or Lover's Leap, as some with an imagination later called it. That is the bluff, east of Starved Rock with a little stream coming out of French canyon between the two bluffs.

Shick Shack told Armstrong the Illini suffered from lack of food and water and the bullets of their enemies but that smallpox added their terrors to their horrible predicament. That caused them, he said to dig pits around the outside of the Rock in the soft dirt, in which they could roll to ease their agony.

Finally, so Shick Shack said, some of the trapped Illini tried to escape and the woods echoed to the death shrieks of the Illini as club, spear and tomahawk did terrible work. Others were carried off to the torture stake leaving the other victims lifeless on the rock.

Shick Shack contended that some of the Illinoi escaped, stole the canoes of their besiegers and fled to Indian friends and the French along the Mississippi for shelter. Their tracks, he said, were covered by light snow, that fell that night and their escape was not discovered until too late for an effective pursuit by their savage besiegers.

The aged chief recalled also one event, after the siege of Starved Rock, that remained in the memory of the Indians for many years. That was the terrible winter in the 1770's, when the game starved because of the deep snows and the Indians huddled day after day in the miserable huts enduring the combined terrors of a merciless winter and famine.

Justice John Dean Caton of Ottawa, a chronicler of early Illinois history, whose works are invaluable heard still another version of the siege of Starved Rock.

It was told to him by one Meachelle in the later 1830's. But Judge Caton waited until 1870 before he told it in a paper read to the Chicago Historical Society December 13, 1870; once again memory may have played false over the long period of years.

Meachelle was then a Pottawattomie chief who said he was a youth at the time the Illini were driven to the top of the Rock. Probably he was among these who squatted on Camp Rock on the fringe of the warriors eyeing Starved Rock for any Illini foolish enough to expose themselves to musket fire from Camp Rock.

William Hickling, the first mayor of Ottawa (1853) had heard the same tale from Meachelle and aided Caton in preparing his paper.

Maechelle did not know either, how long the Illini remained in their craggy death trap. Far away on the other side of the river were the corn fields and food supplies of no use to them, in their agony of hunger.

The blue waters of the Illinois, filled with game fish swirled below the rock, but again was a mockery. Some historians have asserted the besieged cut leather thongs, carrying drinking vessels lowered to the river to obtain water.

Meachelle told Judge Caton, that 11 of the trapped Illini escaped and made their way down river to seek shelter from the French and their Indian friends, which was granted.

But back of the legends was the basis of the attack against the Illini and that was the failure of the conspiracy of Pontiac, great chief of the Ottawas in Michigan.

The Pottowatomies were allied with the Ottawas and Pontiac crafty, cruel, scheming, hating the English and all they stood for, wielding in effect a despotic war club over a loosely formed confederation of hundreds of Indians.

September 13, 1759 the English defeated the French on the heights of Abraham at Quebec and the fall of Canada to the British became inevitable.

Pontiac lived in a small village about five miles north of Detroit. When the British came to take over their new possessions he was at first cordial, but insistent, that he be treated for what he was—the great sachem of many Indian tribes.

He smoked the pipe of peace with Major Robert Roberts detailed by Sir Jeffrey Amherst, the British royal governor, to take possession of the British forts at Detroit and Mackinac, in far northern Michigan at the confluence of Lakes Huron and Michigan.

Pontiac detailed a detachment of warriors to help troops of Rogers on their way with 100 head of cattle, which they were driving from Fort Pitt in Pennsylvania through the wilderness to British forts for slaughter for the garrison.

But the French were bitter at their fate. Their agents visited the Indian tribes, incited them to further hatred of the British, stirred them to frenzy.

The French had supplied them with guns and food and ammunition. The British cut off their supplies and when the warriors visited the forts, where the British flag now flew, instead of the familiar fleur-de-lis they were some times booted out of the fort at the end of a sentry's big foot.

All this led Pontiac to form his great conspiracy against the English and their scattered forts and settlements. The French had laid them out along the thundering waters of the Great Lakes and their little rivers that linked them—places that became famous in colonial history—Green Bay, St. Joseph, Mich, Detroit, the Maumee, Sandusky, Ohio, Niagara, Fort Pitt, and others.

It was the aim of Pontiac to capture these or as many as he could. The conspiracy got underway late in 1762, when Indian agents visited the tribal leaders and enlisted their aid. The war drums throbbed in a score of villages, squaws mixed war paint, moulded bullets, sharpened knives. Children practised the use of bows and arrows. Terror struck the fron-

tier. British lives were sacrificed in a frenzy of hate. Warriors drummed up their courage with savage rituals.

April 27, 1763 the conspirators, says Francis Parkman great American historian, met on the river called Aux Etoiles near Detroit. Pontiac, then nearing middle age, harangued the great council inciting them to fury against the hated British, whom he called "dogs in reds," the supreme insult. Mackinac fell to Indian strategy and the garrison was slaughtered on June 4, the birthday of King George by the combined Ojibway, Chippewa and Sac tribes.

A month before early in May, Detroit then a settlement of about 2,500 was attacked. But tradition is that, Catherine, an Ojibway, Indian woman, warned Captain Gladwyn, commander of the fort at Detroit, that an attack was imminent. The plans of Pontiac to capture the fort by strategy failed. Then he and his allied Indians laid siege to the fort and that too failed, after many months. Pontiac hastened to the distant Illini tribes and tried to enlist their aid in his grand scheme to chase the white men out of the western wilderness. But the Illini would have no part of it. By that time, 1764 they had become a degenerate tribe weakened by constant war and they evaded any part of the grand conspiracy of Pontiac.

The latter saw the handwriting on the wall and capitulated to the British at a grand council on the Wabash near the site of what is now LaFayette, Indiana. Here the Ojibways and the Pottowattomies concluded the treaty of peace with George Croghan, agent for Sir William Johnson, the British governor over the territory.

It was in April 1769 that Pontiac made another trip to the Illinois country this time to visit his old friend St. Ange, the French army officer, who had offered his service to the Spanish at St. Louis after the cession of Louisiana to the French, Pierre Chaoteau, the French trader St. Ange and others entertained Pontiac as a great chief, who it is said wore the full uniform of a French officer given him by Montcalm, French general, who was killed at the battle in Quebec.

In that kind of a uniform his presence in the nearby Indian village at Cahokia was an insult to the British traders, who treated him with contempt, while Pontiac in turn looked down on the Illinois Indians, who five years before had rejected his plea for aid in his conspiracy.

Murder was the inevitable end of all this hatred and Pontiac was felled at Cahokia in April, 1769 and was murdered. News of his slaying spread like a prairie fire among his old followers, the Miamis, the Kickapoos and the Pottawattomies. Once again the war drums throbbed, the war paint was donned, the weapons prepared and a campaign of extermination was planned against the remnants of the once great Illinois tribe.

Some writers have drawn on their imagination, to say the body of Pontiac was cleaned of its flesh, in accordance with Indian customs, and the skull and leg bones carried off to a village of the Indians allied now against the Illinois. These ghastly relics so the tellers of fancy tales relate, were attached to a long pole and waved from Camp Rock as a horrible taunt to the Illinois of what their fate would be.

More prosaic writers say that actually Pontiac was buried in St. Louis, where the Southern Hotel was built.

Uproar and arguments spurred on by the inevitable fire water, that accompanied what started out to be a love feast increased on Indian creek, northeast of Ottawa in the spring of 1770 according to Eaton Osman of

Ottawa. He was author of the "Last of a Great Indian Tribe" and a historian who had access to material that now is lost.

Osman contended the allied Kickapoos and Pottowattomies met to split the territory taken from the vanquished Illini, whose bones, if tradition is to be believed, then were bleaching on top of Starved Rock.

The Miamis to quote Osman claimed the greater part of the territory of the once great Illinois. That, in the fashion of all, who claim credit for doing more than their allies, did not make them any more popular with the Kickapoos and Pottowattomies; more the Miamis told their now angry allies they had muskets while presumably the other Indians besieging the Illinois on Starved Rock had to be content with showering them with arrows, which may or may not have sent some of the besieged to the happy hunting ground.

The squaws, old crones, children and senile warriors took sides in the raging controversy, which then developed into a general brawl. Heads were bashed and presumably some of the warriors joined their ancestors.

The matter could not be settled despite days of argument and battling. Off and on the Miamis and their one time allies fought here and there and many a warrior "kicked the bucket" after these bloody encounters.

Finally the chiefs smoked a pipe of peace and agreed to settle the matter by a battle to be waged on Sugar Creek about 200 miles from the Wabash river in eastern Illinois. The Miamis were to pick 300 of their finest and toughest warriors, the Kickapoos and the Pottowattomies the same number combined.

The argeement was that each side with its 300 warriors was to cross to the east side of the Wabash. Weapons were to be the tomahawk, the bow and arrow, and the spear, the old time Indian weapons.

Dawn came cool and clear on a September day, when the first signs of autumn—the golds, the reds, the bronzes and the scarlets on the hills were brightening the otherwise solid green wilderness.

The roar of battle started as warriors sneaked up on their enemies hidden in the brush and behind the bushes and rocks. Tomahawks cracked skulls, knives did their deadly work, arrows struck home and clubs crushed bones to make their victims helpless and the scalping knives did the rest.

All that day, so the legend goes, the bloody horror went on. At sun-down there were only 12 men left out of the 600, who had been alive at sunrise. There were five Miamis and seven Kickapoos and Pottawattomies. Perry Armstrong of Morris the early day historian, listed the seven survivors as including chiefs Shick Shack, and Sugar. The five Miamis understandably took to their collective heels and fled not knowing, if the seven opponents might suddenly have a "hankering" for further combat, with the five Miamis as their targets. Thereafter the Miamis retired east of the Wabash—and the Kickapoos and the Pottawattomies split the land of the Illini.

The Kickapoos claimed the land between the Wabash and a vague line, according to Osman, running north and south through what is now Livingston county, Illinois.

The Pottawattomies took over the land, including what is now Starved Rock. Their camp was northeast of the famous old rock.

Guerdon Hubbard, one of the hustling young men of Illinois in the early 1820's did business with them as a fur-trader. A native of New England, he was in the egg and butter business at 12 years, to help out

the family income. At 20 he was chief clerk in the Illinois valley for the American Fur Company. Hubbard had a hand in the founding of Danville and Chicago and Ottawa and for years was one of the important figures in the state.

One of the last camp sites of the Pottawattomies was at Kankakee and the site is marked by a monument on the court-house lawn.

The pitiful remnants of the Pottawattomies passed through Ottawa in the fall of 1840 (Ottawa Free Trader) from Michigan, under United States army guard, for a western reservation.

VANISHED CAMP GROUND

AN age was to pass and a mode of life, that had persisted for centuries was to dwindle away, decade by decade, until the last of the Indians had passed from the valley, leaving only their dead, their camp sites, their weapons and their legends for the white man, who was to take over their corn lands, their hunting grounds, their burial grounds and their fishing sites.

Here the Indian had built his lodge, had learned to know of the wilderness its secrets, learned to keep alive in a primitive civilization, learned of the wild animals, their habits, learned of the wild plants and bushes what would help him in his illness, what would help fill his larder against the bitter days of winter, what he should plant and what he should shun.

Here the red man lived in peace for the most part, but when the war drums throbbed, there was terror in the villages, sprawled in protected places.

Here the women and children dwelt in fear, when the warriors took the trail against their enemies, lived in terror, lest the war whoops resound, through the defenseless viallages, and waited in dread lest the tomahawk, the knife, the spear and the club do their deadly work or the torture of the stake take its toll in burning and agonized flesh of helpless prisoners.

Here in the winter the snow lay deep and the waters of the Illinois bordering the great Kaskaskia village and later that of LaVantum froze thick and blue, hard and cold, the snow and ice keeping the warriors in the cabin, keeping the deer in their yard and the other small game deep in their winter quarters.

Here famine then lay its terrible clutches on the silent villages, where the Indians huddled in misery in his cabin warmed only by the smallest of wood fires.

Here in these days of the deep winter, it was not possible to get to corn heaps in the rock caves near the village. The game was not at hand to be killed, the fish could not be speared, there were no birds to be shot.

When these dark days had passed, when the warm south wind heralded the coming of spring, then the Indian lived in a paradise of beauty. The soft green of new verdure clothed the bluffs, brought the grass to the land again, brought the wild duck and the wild goose north on their annual flight of thousands in a flock. It brought the time to plant the corn and beans, and pumpkins in the patches at the village sites, brought the song of the blue bird and the lark to the land again and foretold of the coming of the long lazy summer days, and shortening days of autumn, when the same bluffs would be clothed in brilliant red, in Chinese man-

darin yellow, in deep brown and mixed colors. Then the time would be at hand to gather the hard flinty corn and store it away for the winter, and the time would be near to fletch the hide of the deer and the buffalo to make them soft to provide clothing. The time to gather reeds from the marshes to make mats would be approaching and the south bound migration of the ducks and geese now foretold of the winter to come.

Such was the endless cycle of the centuries, in the beautiful valley of the Illinois, when the coming of the white men told that, for better or for worse, this age was to pass.

The white man had left his foot in the valley, with the coming of Father Marquette and his companion Joliet, one of the truly great figures of French colonial days, whose exploration and travels extended over the many years and for whom the modern Joliet was named.

Men mouldered to dust and bones, with their squaws and their children and lay in flat lands along the river. The camp sites vanished and the game dwindled to a fraction of what it had been, and only the endless cycle of the years persisted.

Then long centuries later came the white man, with his science and his trowels and his knowledge of how to resurrect the buried past, from what lay underground in the corn fields and pasture lands where the Indian had lived.

So through three summers 1947-48-49 these men and women burned brown, by the hot summer sun dug carefully to see what the Indian had left behind to show his mode of living and where his villages were.

Trenches were carefully excavated and brushes and trowels used to clear away the dirt and dust, so that nothing would be lost or misplaced as the work proceeded.

Now the post holes for the lodges were uncovered, showing where they had stood. Here were the garbage pits or midden heaps to use the term of the archeologists. Here were uncovered the artifacts—the spears points, the arrows and war clubs—long buried.

Bits of rusty metal came to light showing the Indians had had contact with the white man and thus fixing the date of the village site as after 1673. Here were the beads worn by the Indian women, who loved their finery as did their white successors.

Most pitiful of all, now and then a skeleton was uncovered of some dead man, woman, or child who had lived in one of the most primitive civilizations the world had ever know, sans law, sans medical service of any kind, sans education, sans even the rudimentary comforts of life, sans religion except their own belief in the goodness and justice of a God, that looked after them in the wilderness.

What the scientists found in the flat lands and fields of the Zimmerman-Danner fields east of Starved Rock, on the north side of the river was only part of what actually had lain there so many decades ago.

The white explorers and missionaries, who came into the valley of the Illinois in such numbers in the 17th and 18th centuries dreamed of a waterway that would link Lake Michigan and the Fathers of Waters via the broad Illinois past the Indian camp sites of Kaskaskia and LaVantum.

That waterway was realized in one way in 1848, when the Illinois-Michigan canal was built from Chicago to Peru. It passed to the north of the great camps of the Illini Indians and their friends and the gangs of toiling laborers, mainly Irish immigrants, who dug the ditch, may have unearthed some of the camp sites and corn lands of the long departed Indian.

There was agitation in the early part of the 19th century for a new and modern lake to the gulf waterway. Leading the movement in Ottawa were such civic leaders as Richard Jordan, hardware merchant, Judge H. M. Johnson, former Mayor Al. Schoch and others.

In 1908 the people of Illinois approved a \$20,000,000 bond issue for digging the channel and building the necessary locks on the Illinois river for the new waterway.

The work started in the middle 1920's and was finished by the United States government, which now runs the waterway from Chicago to the Mississippi river at Alton.

The closing of the dam gates at Starved Rock, above the site of old Fort St. Louis in 1933 doomed part of the Indian villages site to watery grave. It was not possible for scientists of the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois and the Illinois State Museum then, to excavate more of the Indian village sites.

Their findings were taken into a base camp atop Buffalo Rock and there carefully tagged and cataloged prior to being taken to museums for study.

The last of the excavating was done on top of Starved Rock in the summer of 1949. There the same kind of careful patient work uncovered artifacts, bits of rusty gun pieces, the beads, the bullets, the tiny stone fragments of arrows or whole ones the evidence of past ages as found when they were run through a fine screen.

It was evident, then, that the rock had been used for hundreds of years by the Indians until the white man acquired title to it through diplomatic circles of the great powers of the world—first Spain, then France, Great Britain and finally the infant United States.

SENECA BEAD MAKER

MAINTEINING the traditional silence of the Indian-part of their sales talk in a good many cases—Frank Hart for 40 years was a fixture in Starved Rock state park, until his death on November 27, 1952. Hart was a member of the Seneca tribe. In his own words he said, "The state acquired me almost as soon as they did the rock. I came here in 1912—the state bought the rock in 1911."

Hart set up in business at the Wishing Well, at the west end of the rock and there he made unknown thousands of rings from beads. Small boys and girls who came to the park in lumbering cars of the pre-world war I vintage brought their own children back in sleek modern automobiles and found Hart still at work making his rings.

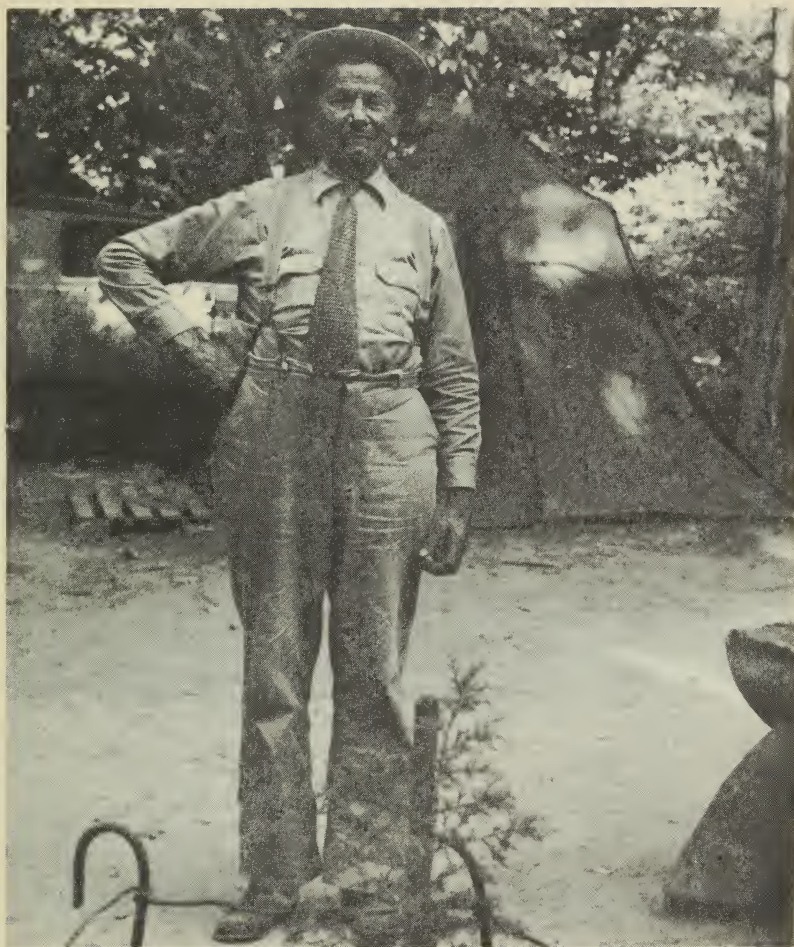
His canvas tent, pitched close to his work bench, was near the Wishing Well into which thousands of visitors over the period of 40 years tossed small coins.

Regularly Hart cleaned out the Wishing Well of its coins and cashed the receipts.

His winters were spent in Florida over a period of a long time.

Hart watched the white oak trees in the state park; come October when they obtained a blood red color, he packed his gear into his old car, folded his tent like the immortal Arab, and was off to Florida for six months.

He knew far away, about the time the same oak trees, in the park would be the size of squirrel's ears come May. That in the ancient Indian



Frank Hart
"Seneca Indian"

legend was time to plant corn—and it was also the sign for Hart to start north back to the Wishing Well in Starved Rock state park.

Two world wars almost put him out of business. His beads came from Austria, and Czecho-Slovakia and their production practically ceased as the factory workmen were hustled into uniform. But Hart obtained enough of a supply to keep him in business.

He was content in his chosen spot in the park, for so many years, but was moved to protest at one time, when it was proposed to install a zoo in the lower part of the park near his stand.

That would have included some buffalo, which for generations, had provided the western Indians—not Senecas, who are an eastern tribe—with food, chips for fires, and hides for tents but Hart did not like buffalo.

"I am glad the stinking things never got into the park," he said, "they would have ruined me."

MODERN PLAYGROUND

WHEN Daniel F. Hitt was a fiery young man and in his prime, he buckled on the armor and went to war to help chase the Indians out of northern Illinois.

When the Black Hawk War of 1832 was concluded, there were no Indians left in that area, except those who remained at peace and thereafter scared the wits out of frightened settler's wives by appearing at the back door of a cabin for a handout.

Some used the reliable broom or brandished a mop to get rid of their unwelcome guests. Others were more kind and passed them out a plate of cornbread or a good piece of venison.

When the same Hitt was long on the sunset side of life he was a still rough and a ready character, with an acid and sometimes profane tongue, he sold Starved Rock birthplace of Illinois and potential playground of the middle west along with a hundred acres of land near it. He retained other acreage west of the present park and still more land in and near Ottawa. The colonel was as expert at picking up land as he was careful to preserve, most of his personal correspondence over the 60 years that he was a resident of LaSalle county. He helped put down an "Irish rebellion" of pugnacious canal workers in LaSalle county in 1928. How many died in it from their dispersion by Hitt, county sheriff Olson Woodruff and others is not known.

The Civil war rolled around and once more the colonel by now afflicted with the aches and pains of approaching middle age buckled on his armor, this time to take up arms in defense of the nation against threatened disunion; but chasing rebels at 50 was much different, than sending Indians scuttling when he was 20. The colonel spent a year in the service, then resigned from the 53rd Illinois and called it quits to his military career. That did not mean he retired to the fireside, his slippers and his pipe for the balance of his days; far from it, his trade was that of a surveyor, one that calls for much endurance and sturdy legs; coupled with a well developed bump of curiosity it also could and did in the case of the colonel leave much information on the potential playground of the middle west that modern historical or archeological sources no longer have or neglected, when it was available nearly a century ago.

The tireless colonel mapped and surveyed what he called Indian or mound builders' forts in Marseilles, north of Wedron along the Fox river and near Starved Rock, but not in the park proper. In his 60 years of active life in LaSalle county the colonel acquired Starved Rock and land around it. He left surveys of what he called a "Fort" just outside the park. What it was used for, who built it and for what purpose has never been determined. Modern archeologists might find the answer, if amateur diggers have not destroyed much of it and then add still more to the already fascinating lore of the park, so rich in Indian and French history.

This fort surveyed by Hitt was north of the present day State Highway 71 and directly south of old Starved Rock along the head of French canyon and a ravine at right angles.

Hitt surveyed this "old fort" as he called it in August 1867. He identified it as south of the rock running in a general east and west direction and continuous except for a "gateway" on the east. He located a "well" to the north of the "parapet." A black oak stump which still stood in



First American Flag ever flown atop Starved Rock. Note number of stars.

the parapet he estimated was at least 160 years old. One side was along the ravine, where the stump was found and another was protected by a bluff from 50 to 75 feet high.

Apparently Colonel Hitt was the first private owner of Starved Rock and made his purchase from the United States Government. January 10, 1861, William E. Keefer, register of the U. S. land office at Springfield made the following entry as shown by the records of Colonel Hitt;

"I, William E. Keefer, register of the land office at Springfield, do hereby certify, that on the 23rd day of June 1835 Daniel F. Hitt purchased of the general government at the land office at Galena, the south fraction of the northwest fractional quarter of section 22 in township 33 north range number two, east of the third principal meridian, containing 68 acres and that said land at the time of said purchase was within the district then subject to sale at the land office at Galena now Springfield."

All these flashed through his still keen mind, when he determined to sell the rock, and he could not recall that to his knowledge the American flag had ever flown on Starved Rock. Only the French fleur-de-lis so far as he knew had waved over the great rock. The British hold on the Rock had been a tenuous one for less than a quarter century and their flag had never flown over the Rock. The Spanish had held an equally slender claim on it through the discoveries of the 15th and 16th century explorers hundreds of miles to the south.

But for all of his gruffness, there was under the rough exterior of the old colonel a liking for the famous rock, that he had first seen, when he was a young fellow, which had been the home of the Indians for centuries, the birthplace of Illinois by the French, and a playground for the men and women of his own generation.

Here they held their picnics in the shadow of the rock, here they had discussed its rich history, here they had found the artifacts left by the Indians and some had heard from the lips of the Indians the legends that had been handed down by their ancestors. Here the colonel had gathered a bushel of Indian relics, some relics, some crosses the origin of which is not known.

So the colonel on the face of it, had some one make a home-made American flag, still in a fair state of preservation, with 40 stars, to hoist above the great rock around which so much rich and tragic history had centered more than two centuries before his time came to dispose it by sale.

The 40 star flag would date it for a few months of time in American history, when such flags were used in 1890 and then gave away to others as new states were added to the union.

When the colonel hoisted his flag on the rock is not known. He may have recalled, also, at the same time, that in the 1850's an Indian tribe in Oklahoma proposed, that a chunk of the same rock be taken out and placed in the George Washington monument in Washington under construction in the early 1850's. It was to be a gift of the red men to the white as a symbol of friendship. The proposition never went beyond the suggestion stage.

So now the colonel was ready to negotiate for the sale of the rock to Ferdinand Walther of Chicago. Some of the letters that passed before the deal was finished, have been preserved, because, as said, Hitt apparently never discarded letters. He kept them by the hundreds in box after box. Colonel Hitt it would appear began dickering for the sale of old Starved Rock in 1889 as shown by letters to one E. Grube Esq. The latter may have been the agent for Harris W. Huehl, architect and superintendent in the Metropolitan building in Chicago. Huehl seems to have been the broker in the deal then pending; Hitt wrote in this fashion to Grube.

"Grube November 18, 1889."

"I have seen the man I spoke to you about and have concluded, that if your friends will make the payment to date I will let them have the Rock, and 100 acres of land for \$15,000 and will expect an answer within a month as the man who was wishing to rent it will need some time to get everything ready to move in on the first of March if I don't sell."

Respectfully, Yours Truly,

D. F. Hitt.

The deal was completed February 15, 1890 in LaSalle as shown by this record:

"This certifies that D. F. Hitt has sold to Ferdinand Walther one hundred acres of land, including Starved Rock in LaSalle county, Illinois, the same being shown by the plat furnished to said Walther for the sum of fourteen thousand, one hundred dollars cash, and six thousand, nine hundred dollars, on or before 60 days from this date and balance to be secured by first mortgage on same on or before five years of former date and deed delivered, when the sixty day payment is made with interest of six percent annually. Said Walther to have option of purchasing from

Hitt the balance of said tract, of 265 acres more at \$45 per acre, within one year at such time as Walther may choose, Hitt to furnish abstracts of title and make warranty deed.

The agreement was signed by Hitt and Walther.

People reached Starved Rock before the days of automobiles by carriage, on bicycles for the younger "sports" of the 1890's, others by train or by interurban. In the case of the train before there was a bridge across the Illinois, south of Utica, ferrymen plied their trade hauling people across the wide Illinois, where the canoes of Indians, missionary priests and explorers had bobbed centuries before.

Where the great Indian camps of LaVantum and Kaskaskia had stood on the north bank of the Illinois, south of Utica, interprising speculators, more than a century ago, laid out the old town of Science or Old Utica. The last building vanished from it late in the 19th century. Long before Science had fallen into disuse as had the great Indian camps. The village of North Utica to give it the legal name, was founded in the early 1850's, when the coming of the Rock Island railroad and the Illinois Michigan canal doomed Science to oblivion.

Science had been a stopping place for steamers for many years; its trade with southern point included dry goods, sugar, manufactured small articles and the staple articles for commerce of those days—barrelled whiskey.

The first steamer, that passed old Science was the "Traveler," which docked at Ottawa, October 16, 1831. The Traveler kicked up the clean waters of the Illinois with her paddle wheel, black smoke belched from her stacks along with showers of sparks. Indians lurking along the shores fled in terror from the "White man's fire canoe." Six months later the Caroline came up river and docked April 4, 1832 in Ottawa. A few weeks later the Caroline hauled supplies to Fort Wilbourn, of Black Hawk war service, on the bluff a mile south of LaSalle. She was armed with a field piece, protected by planks, against Indians.

The ghost town of Science, on the west end of the old Indian village west of the Rock, was matched by the town of Gibraltar at the west end of the mass of sand stone now called Buffalo Rock. That would put Gibraltar about at the east end of the Indian villages strung out on the north bank of the Illinois. But Gibraltar, named for some fancied resemblance to Gibraltar the famous rock that guards the straits of Gibraltar, never had any inhabitants but bullfrogs and turtles. The Miami Indians, however, had occupied Buffalo Rock itself before the west end of it was cut up by a coal strip mine and a sand pit leaving the east 43 acres to be made into a state park.

The Miamis and other Indians had looked down on the tiny canoes of the French missionary priests and the traders. The priests had asked of their superiors, for use in the wilderness and in their work, such varied items as these as shown by a letter not signed, which may have been written by Father Jacques Gravier. The latter was the successor to Father Claude Allouez in the later 1670's, who, in turn, had succeeded Marquette. Here is what the letter asked in part; Rice, raisins, prunes, 25 pots, (pot was a French measure of about 1½ pints) of Spanish wine, 150 livres of powder, a gross of large clasp knives, 6 bars of soap, three hatchets, 1,000 needles, 10 livres of glass beads, six finger rings, 50 livres of bullets, India ink and cotton, a livre of nutmeg and cloves, six pair of half worsted hose and material to make awnings as protection against

the gnats and mosquitos, one dozen trade shirts, six ells of cloth for capotes, for making breech clouts, summer and winter cassocks, fifty livres of flour, six pairs of shoes, breeches, shoes, double soled slippers and three good razors with whetstones.

The missionaries also asked for the necessary church supplies for the carrying on of their work. These included: A host iron, and a shaper for cutting the wafers. They asked for a little Spanish wine and some dainties such as sugar for the priests, who were ill of their labors in the wilderness. Included in the request also were supplies for the sick, a syringe, one livre theriac, ointment, plasters, alum, vitroil, aniseed, medicine and cotton candle wicking, 12 small towels, six small napkins and three covered bowls for the sick, pewter, spoons, knives, basins and plates.

About the time Starved Rock was sold by Colonel Hitt two Ottawans, aided by others interested in the same thing, started a campaign to have the state take over the property, which was the birthplace of Christianity and civilization in Illinois. One was Horace Hull, an attorney by profession, but who instead of practicing became the official circuit court clerk reporter for LaSalle county, a post he held for many years. The other was William Osman, Jr., son of William Osman, who in 1840 became editor of the Free Trader, the first weekly newspaper in Ottawa that lasted beyond a few issues. The Free Trader was a powerful democratic organ for 87 years until it was sold to the Daily Republican Times. At that time William Osman, Jr. was editor.

Hull and Osman took scores of pictures of Starved Rock and its surroundings as it looked before modernization got started and changed the face of the playground of the middle west in so many ways. The pictures now are priceless; they are on glass negatives and show many canyons, the Rock itself and so on. Hull and Osman carried their campaign throughout the state with lectures and stereoptican slides rousing interest in their campaign to have the state make a public park out of the Rock and its canyons, bluffs and wooded slopes. They were joined by Al Richards, an Ottawa newspaper editor, who also took an interest in historical matters and by Father Donat Lowery Crowe, who was pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church at Utica from July 16, 1891 to September 24, 1897. His interest in having the state park established at Starved Rock rose from the fact that his parish grew out of the Mission of the Immaculate Conception the first parish established west of the Alleghenies by Father Marquette in 1675.

In Evanston Dr. James Alton James, professor of history from 1897 to 1935, took a natural interest in the same matter, from his long study of history of the American middlewest with particular attention to that of George Rogers Clark. It was the work of Clark and his Kentucky and Virginia "Long Knives" that, in the Revolutionary war, wrested the Northwest Territory from England and gave this incredibly rich territory to the infant United States of America in 1778-79.

The work of these men and many others culminated in an act of the general assembly on June 10, 1911 authorizing the purchase of 280 acres of land for the state park from Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand Walther for \$146,000. The first purchase was made Dec. 29, 1911. Successive purchases and acquisitions have followed until the park now sprawls for three miles on the south bank of the river.

March 23, 1912 25 acres was purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Reid and March 18, 1912, five acres from the estate of Colonel Hitt.

James Alton James

Dean of the Graduate School and
Professor of American History Emeritus
Northwestern University.

Last surviving member of the State
commission, which purchased Starved
Rock for the State of Illinois.



Three additions were made in 1916. Feb. 21, the state bought 2.31 acres from the Walthers and April 5, John H. Carlin sold 42.11 acres and August 8th, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Harbeck sold 2.31 acres. Still more acquisitions have followed. August 27, 1920, Mr. and Mrs. James A. Mitchell sold 13.2 acres to the State. The department of public works and buildings. December 3, 1931 sold 7.19 acres to the department of public works and buildings and Feb. 14, 1935 the state bought .25 acre from Mr. and Mrs. John Pohar. March 31, 1944, the state acquired 384.78 acres from the Mathiessen estate, which is west of the park proper and has not been developed for park purposes.

The state, when it bought the park, authorized the setting up of the first commission to administer its affairs, which now are carried on by the Division of Parks and Memorials with William R. Allen, as superintendent. In turn the division is under the supervision of the Department of Conservation with Glen D. Palmer as director. Named to this first commission were Father Crowe, Richards and Dr. James.

Of those early years of modern park history Dr. James wrote under date of December 12, 1955. "I was for nine years chairman of the committee for the acquisition of a state park for Illinois. "I was appointed as a member of the first committee of five by Governor Charles Deneen to make a survey of the state for the selection of a state park. Starved Rock was agreed upon by the committee as the most desirable place for the beginning. I was made chairman of the committee. The next committee of three of which I was re-appointed chairman by Governor Deneen proceeded to secure the Property. The committee of three was made up of two Republicans and Father Crowe as a Democrat; I was again made chairman. The minutes of our meetings were kept by Mr. Richards. I appeared before the legislature and interested Governor Deneen in the acquisition of Starved Rock for the State": One of those who worked with this same committee in the formative years of the park was John P. White, of Ottawa now 88 years old, while Dr. James, when he wrote

the letter quoted is 91. White was the first park custodian and served 12 years. Those were the years when the park was undergoing many face liftings. The old hotel on the lower level west of the Rock was still in service. The state had a swimming pool to the west of the rock. A dance hall was constructed in the lower levels and Bill Jasper was the popular concessionaire. Ferry boat service was set up running from the lower park level to Horse Shoe Canyon up river in the park. Now the ferry takes its load of pleasure seekers to the half mile long dam in the river, over which they walk to be transferred to another ferry above the dam.

Hard roads were laid into the park in the 1920's, concessions stands and rest rooms were built, a parking lot laid out, and a camp ground set up overlooking the Rock from the bluff from the south. Trails were laid out through out the park, so that nature lovers could enjoy its wealth of trees and plants, some rare in this part of the state. The steep path up the Rock was improved. The Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1914 dedicated a granite park marker with a bas relief of Lincoln at the west base of the rock. The only connection, that he ever had with the park may have been in 1832, when he passed through it to and from one Black Hawk war fort to another to be sworn into or out of the service, since he served in three outfits in three months.

Still the park remained in a wild state over much of its area and needed more face lifting, which the state could not afford at own expense, when hard times struck the nation in the 1930's. Public bodies scraped the bottom of the financial barrel, while private purses grew lean. That was the time the Civilian Conservation corps was organized by the Federal Government in Washington. Two companies were assigned to the park. One company had its barracks in the lower level, with some of the buildings later taken over by the state for the use of the Park Custodian. The other company had its barracks on "Parkman's Plain", named for the great American historian, who long ago made a trip to Utica to satisfy himself that he was correct in his assumption, that Starved Rock actually was the site of Fort St. Louis, capital of the French colonial empire in the middle west until it was moved down state to Kaskasia in 1690.

The C. C. C. under the direction of the regular army officers and work superintendents did yeoman's work in laying new trails, building shelters and giving the park a "New Look". Probably many of those, who did the work later gave their lives for the nation in World War II, as they were then at the age that was quickly called for service.

The state took another long, look at its property in the 1930's and decided, that more face lifting was needed. That included abolishment of the old camp ground in the thick woods on the bluff and construction of a new one on the lower level of the park much larger and more convenient north of the parking lot.

With the camp ground on the bluff gone, the state looked over the old hotel and decided that it, too, had outlived its days. A new lodge, one of the finest of its type in the middle west was constructed on the brow of the bluff, with a long porch at the rear overlooking Starved Rock to the north east. The cost of the main lodge and cabins was between \$200,000 and \$300,000, while the contract for the construction of the 48 room hotel addition was \$200,000. At present day prices the state has a \$1,000,000 hotel in the park, open the year around and offering not only luxurious accommodations to the guests, but a background of



Most popular of all Illinois State Park's is Starved Rock, and this scene of the lounge will give some idea of the immenseness of the lodge which has forty-five guest rooms in addition to nearby overnight cabins.

French colonial history and American middle western history unmatched by any other state park in Illinois dating back now almost three centuries.

Other park custodians have included George Malone, and John Biggs, John Heitman, and the incumbent, Terrence S. Martin. All have had their work cut out for them, with their staffs, in accommodating crowds that have topped the 50,000 mark on a three day holiday as people throng this modern playground of the middle west, thronged with the ghosts of the Indians, the explorers and the missionary priests of three centuries ago, who wrote immortal pages of history in a beautiful setting, that is without equal in the middle west—Starved Rock.

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